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Curious About BioVentureHub *Community Members*



Steinar Thoresen,
MD, Ph.D. Medical Director
Co-founder of NordicRWE

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**Meet Steinar Thoresen, Medical Director,
and Co-founder of the Norwegian company NordicRWE..**

We had a talk about what drives him, the challenges they've faced, and why being part of BioVentureHub, so close to AstraZeneca, makes a real difference.

To start with - what is NordicRWE and what do you do?

NordicRWE is an emerging company specializing in real-world evidence (RWE) generation, focusing on real-world evidence analytics and insights. By leveraging Nordic real-world data and advanced analytics and cutting-edge methodologies, NordicRWE is developing solutions that support data-driven drug development.

My primary mandate is to guarantee the medical validity and clinical relevance of the company's data analytics.

What inspired you to become an entrepreneur?

I have always been curious and felt a certain unrest when working in a daily routine for long. It may be a rather uncommon step to be entrepreneur at retirement-age, but this is also a time for using your previous acquired knowledge in an innovative way.

I have always been interested in how to use health-data to improve healthcare. The authorities and several stakeholders have been promoting health-data as the new oil in Norway (and the Nordics). I was time to set the agenda and explore the possibilities together with skilled colleagues in NordicRWE.

What's the biggest challenge you've faced, and what did you learn from it?

There have been several challenges during my career of course. I have been director of the national cancer screening program in Norway and there was a big fight to establish these programs. We know today that screening has saved several women from dying of cancer.

The challenge was even bigger when we introduced the HPV-vaccine in Norway. The learning is never to give up and believe in scientific documentations.

Leaving the public sector after 30 years and to start working (2006) in the pharma-industry was probably my largest challenge. This was a big culture change, and I had no idea about the skills, dedication and innovation in this sector. At that time there was very little dialogue and private/public collaboration. The situation is very different now.

The challenge that I am facing now is access to data, both in terms of time and lack of understanding of epidemiological research. There is gap between the political signals both from the government and parliament and the willingness of the register-owners secure access for both academia and industry.

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What's one thing people often misunderstand about your field?

I often experience that both clinicians, the authorities (payers) and researchers lack knowledge about the potential of Nordic health data.

What's the most exciting thing happening in your company, right now?

The increasing understanding among pharmaceutical companies that health data (RWE) is of importance in every step of drug development, including drug signaling. And of course the increasing use of AI and LLM and our promising results in use of foundation models to achieve more accurate predictions.

We also have a strong feeling that NordicRWE is accepted as a technology company balancing own science and project including industry and academia.

How has being part of the BioVentureHub community influenced your journey?

I have been around for a long time, but I have never received such a warm welcome anywhere, including practical issues and networking.

The Hub is really a vibrant and inspiring place to work and visit. There have been productive opportunities to meet stakeholders at AZ and start collaboration. This has also been important for our visibility at Nordic level.

If you could give one piece of advice to your younger self, what would it be?

Believe more in yourself. Speak up and sort out the nonsense .

What's a personal mantra or mindset that keeps you going?

I am afraid that my mind is focused on competition, but to win I must be part of a team with different competence and look for talent. Maybe the last thing is my main mantra.

Thank you, Steinar, for sharing your experience and insights!

Why Real-World Evidence?

Real-world evidence (RWE) is pivotal to evidence-based medicine, helping bridge the gap between clinical research and everyday practice. By leveraging data from everyday healthcare settings, RWE enables faster, more cost-efficient generation of robust scientific insights, accelerating data-driven drug development and informing better clinical and regulatory decision-making.