

Low Vision Services in Denmark: Mapping the Current State

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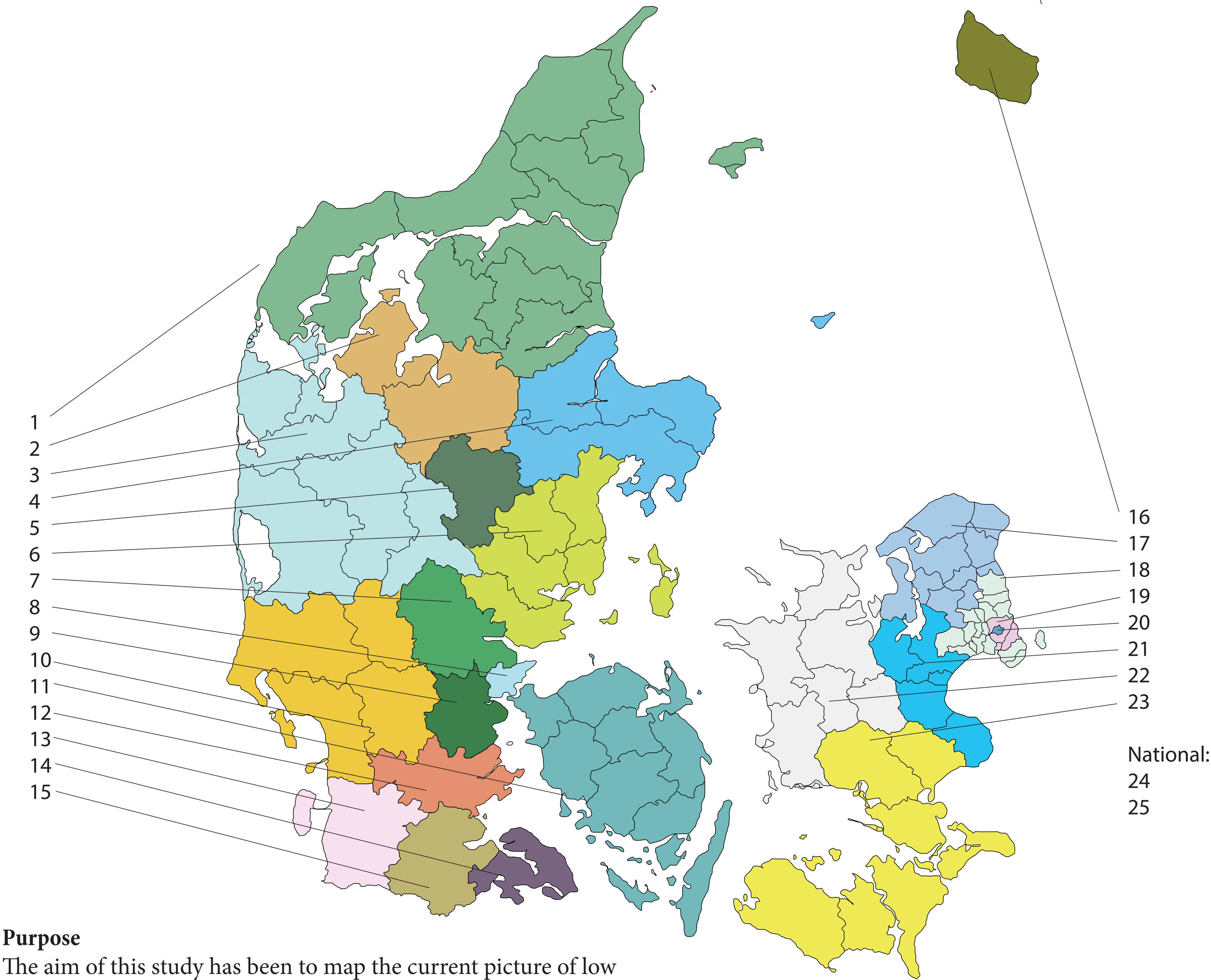
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Low vision services in Denmark

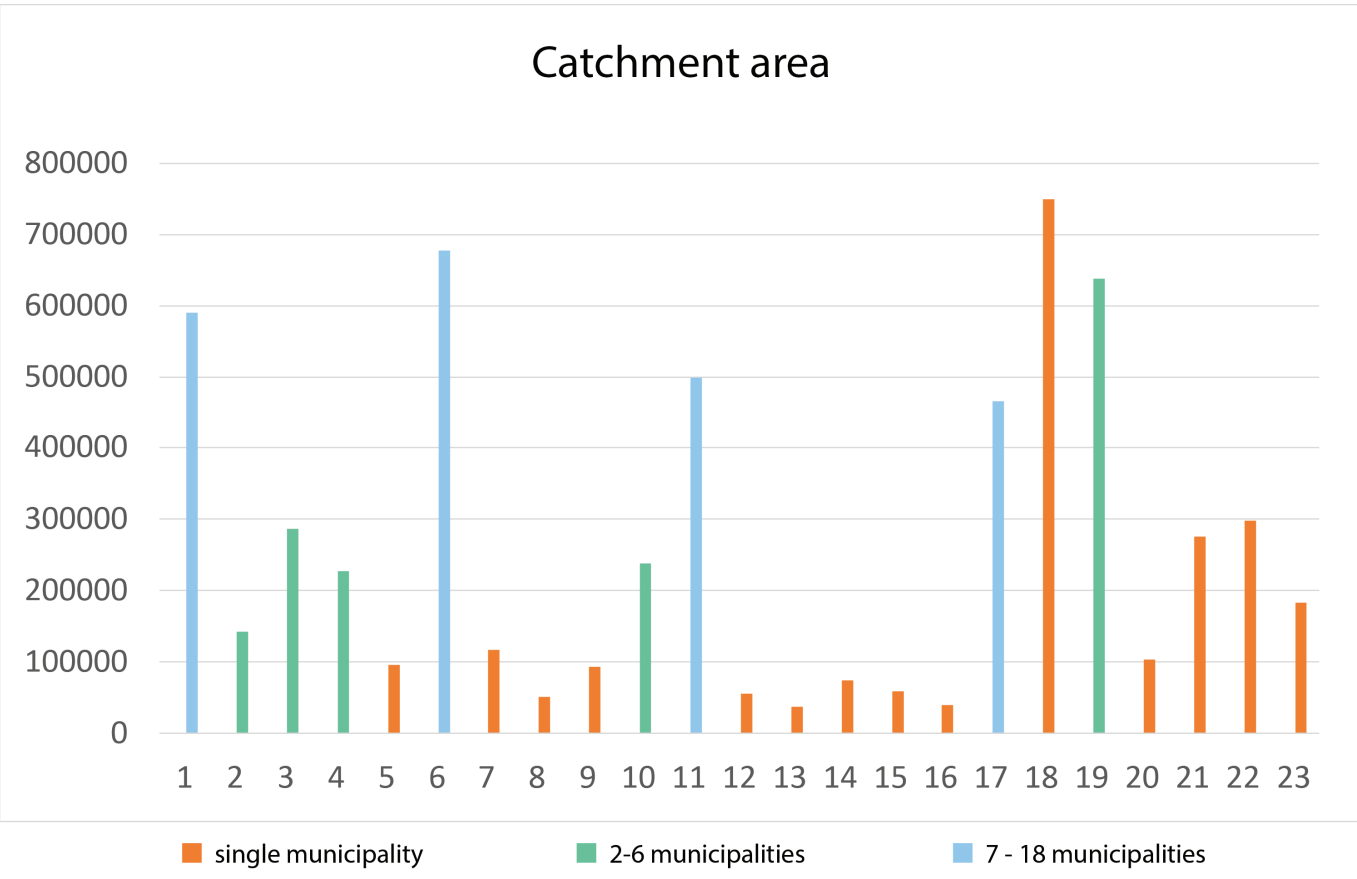
Mapping the current state



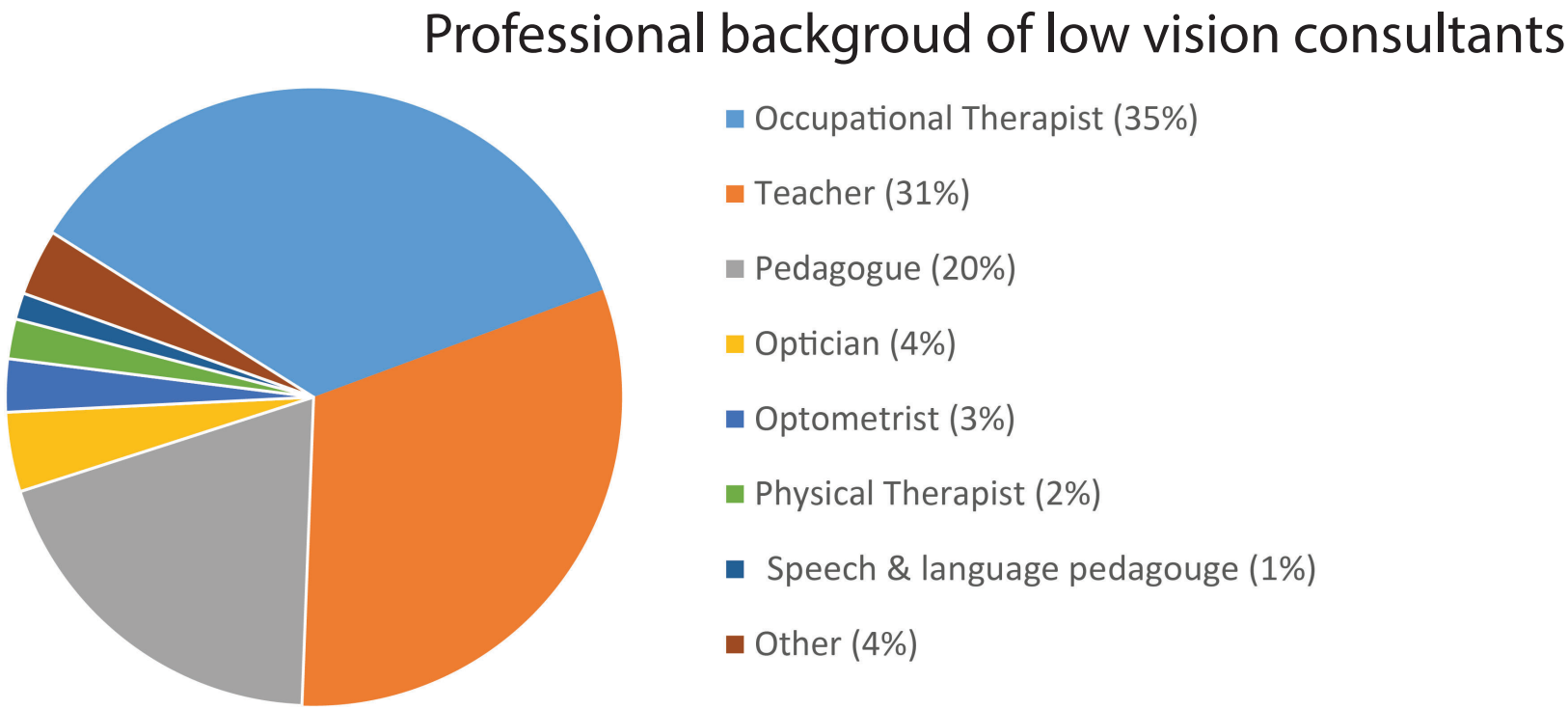
Purpose
The aim of this study has been to map the current picture of low vision services in Denmark, including their work and approach to lighting in low vision rehabilitation.

Method
30 semistructured phone interviews were conducted with representatives from the 23 regional and two national low vision centres, regarding:

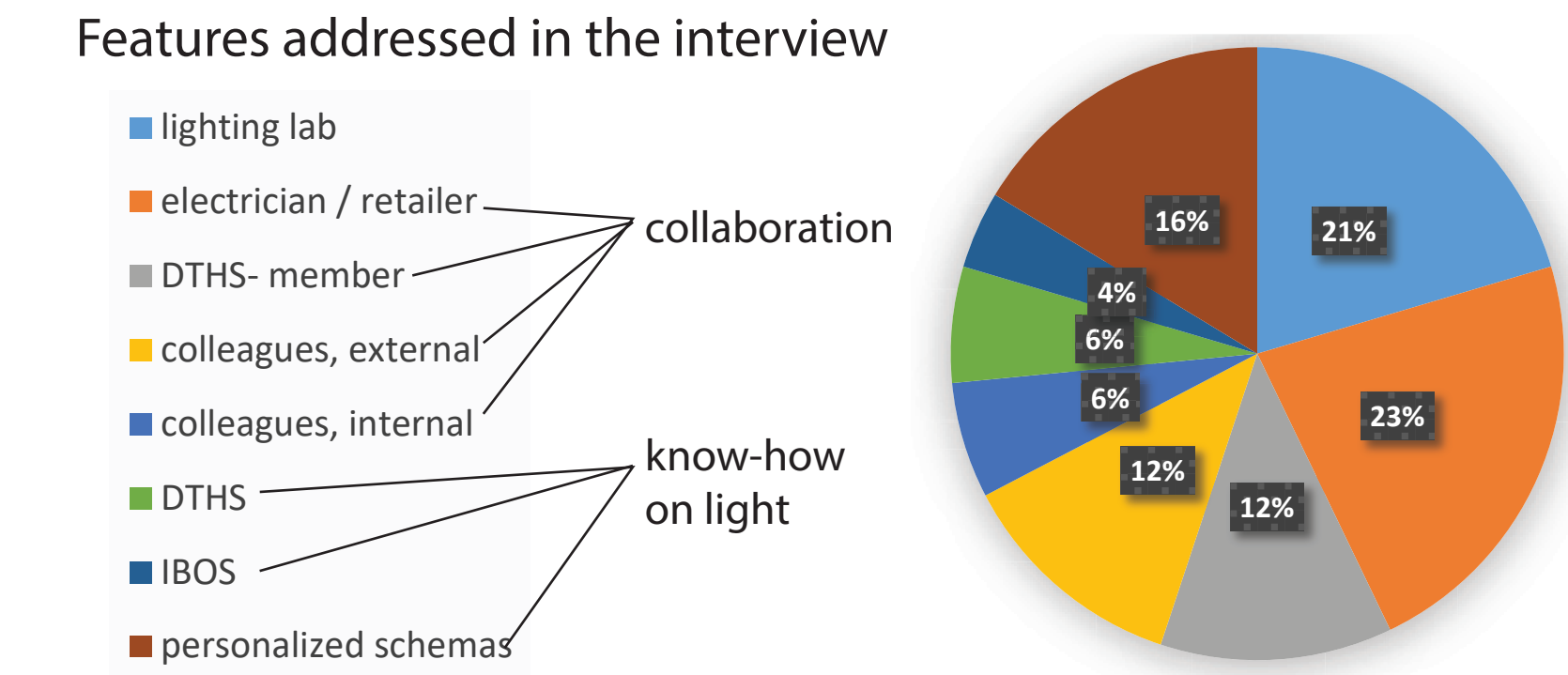
- the organisation, affiliation and appropriation structure
- the professional background of the low vision consultants (LVC)
- their practices concerning lighting assessments.



Findings
The size and catchment area of the 24 centers range from 1 to 22 LVC's, from 1 to 18 municipalities, and 2 of the centers were national. The professional background of the 144 LVC's: occupational therapists (51), teachers (45), social educators / pedagogues (28) and the remaining 20 LVC's represented 10 additional professions.



The mapping show huge diversity across the organisational structure and configuration of professionals, which eventually effects the actual low vision service offered to the citizens. Important aspects addressed in the interviews were the role of the allocation structure in the services, collegial cooperation and sharing of knowledge across the professional network, especially concerning practice knowledge on specific work functions such as the lighting assessments and their role in rehabilitation.



Furthermore, the practices of lighting assessments showed diversity of methods, proportions, facilities and aids, and not at least the degree of rehabilitative or recovery based approach in the assessment. Several interviewees are call for guidelines and standards of domestic lighting in general, and in particular for visually impaired citizens. The lighting standards they use today are based on normal vision and apply to the work environments and not home environments as such.

Main findings on lighting:

In the centres, individual consultants specializes in the lighting assessments. This knowledge is often tacit and not made explicit or systematized.

Lighting practices differ across the centres, as:

a) Some of the large centres develops and accumulate knowledge in interdisciplinary collaboration

b) Small centres are more mono-disciplinary (often only one LVC), have few lighting cases a year, and less resources for accumulation of knowledge

Consequently, there is a need for standards and guidelines - and for knowledge-sharing across the community of practice

Acknowledgements
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