

COMMUNICATING HEALTH

MEDICAL OUTREACH EFFORTS IN THE MEDIA

Monograph coordinated by Lucía Sapiña

Good communication is fundamental in the promotion and maintenance of individual and collective health. Despite the vast amount of information we can currently access, misconceptions still persist in fundamental topics such as vaccination or the prevention and treatment of certain serious or chronic diseases such as cancer or AIDS. People have to make decisions concerning their health, and must be informed rigorously and sincerely to that end. However, this task is not simple. It is essential to understand how the different communicative processes work and reflect on the role of the media in this field.

This monograph emerged from the seminar on communication and health that MÈTODE organised with the Menéndez Pelayo International University in October 2015 in Valencia. The issue tries to convey the plurality of perspectives present in the seminar. Health communication research – but also specialised journalism – helps us to reflect about what health communication is, what it should become and, especially, what can be done to advance it.

Lucía Sapiña. Journalism graduate from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain). She has a Master's Degree in History of Science and Scientific Communication from the University of Valencia (Spain). She is a member of the Two Cultures Observatory, a multidisciplinary research group of the University of Valencia that analyses the relationship between journalism and science. Her current research focuses on cancer communication, both in the press and in social networks.

The research project "The language and culture of health" (CS02014-61928-EXP), which provided the basis for this monograph in MÈTODE SSI, gathers 10 researchers from different Spanish universities (Jaume I University, University of Valencia, University of Alacant, University of Almería and University of Valladolid) working on discursive and communicative aspects of medical practice.

The artist that illustrates this monograph is Vicent Marco (L'Alcúdia, Valencia, Spain, 1956). Through his particular perspective, Vicent Marco interprets several aspects of health communication. The symbology of the works presented herewith highlights aspects such as the mind and the heart, the prevention and treatment of diseases and medical information, which can sometimes seem too influenced by the media.

The background image is a fragment of a picture by Vicent Marco, *Media profile*, 2015. Mixed technique, 38 x 51 cm.