

# 1st International Research Conference on eHealth and eWell-being «Evaluating the Evidence for a Paradigm Shift in Health»

## Palau Macaya

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,

I'd like to start this brief speech with a phrase used by professor Alejandro Jadad, who we awarded an honorary doctorate from the UOC yesterday, and who will speak after me. His words were:

“in health, there will never be enough resources while we all fight individually”.

Paying heed to this call, a call that echoes that of Dumas's three musketeers, the UOC's eHealth Center has made collaboration one of its strong points.

Today, at this conference, which aims to be the first of many successful meetings, the speakers and attendees representing our international partners – from Norway, Canada and Colombia – will be able to share a forum and debates with professionals from the UOC.

All united by the same belief: that sharing is the best way to build together, to connect and to multiply our individual potential.

In the same way that today's conference seeks to share the experiences and research in eHealth and eWell-being of the respective specialists; the little over twenty years of the UOC's history have been characterized for aiming for and achieving this ideal of collaboration, connection, multiplication in all fields and, above all, in the fields of training and education.



*«Designed for a networked world, the UOC grasped, right from the start, the disruptive potential of the internet.»*

Without sacrificing the generation of knowledge, the promotion of research, or pushing the boundaries of technology, we took on and stressed our role as a node.

Because, while we accept that knowledge is no longer exclusively held by universities, but shared and dispersed – from operating theatres to museums, or companies and individual creators –, it is now more pressing than ever that we act as the link to connect, multiply, facilitate, join...

If we want networks, if we believe in networks, we need to look to nodes. If we want to create a university of the future, we can't limit ourselves to emulating formulas from the past.

And this means looking to networks, but also looking again at education and at health, to overturn certain assumptions that have been shown to be ineffective, and replace them with new visions that foster citizens' autonomy.

As the English economist John Maynard Keynes said, if things change, if the world evolves, then our response and opinions must change with them, must adapt.



*«Without adaptation, there is no improvement, just stagnation. Let's not fool ourselves: we are because we evolve.»*

When the UOC designed its learning model, many people thought that the technology was the decisive element, without realizing that the internet was merely the means. Because that which makes us different was and still is found in our placing the student at the centre.

Thus, the classroom is designed not for the teaching staff, or the contents or the University as an institution, instead everything is designed in terms of the student. The student understood as the central focus of a process that aims to train them and provide them with skills.

Simple, but disruptive. The whole model is based on the abilities, needs and potential of the student. A unique and, simultaneously, global approach.

Relatively speaking, eHealth is also facing a similar revolution: placing the citizen at the centre, looking to educate them and promoting an understanding of health that goes beyond ailments, and takes into account the illness and stresses the importance of well-being.

Again, with technology at our side, as a precise tool to help us do so. This is just as important as collaboration and exchange. Technology and collaboration to provide a new vision, and a new approach.

Without doubt, this is a good way to start to make that which appears in this conference's subtitle a reality: "a paradigm shift in health".

As German physicist Max Planck said, a new paradigm "does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it".

It would be marvellous, and a clear sign of success, if our new paradigm can convince the sceptics and, simultaneously, look after their health and improve their well-being.

Thank you very much everyone.

Josep A. Planell