

NEWSLETTER

DIGITAL MEDIA IN CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT

Dear readers,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2025!

As we move into spring, we are pleased to share some updates and reflections from the past months. This issue includes a recap of our recent conference contributions—most notably IP6's participation at the 70th DGPuK conference in Berlin—as well as a look back at our Annual Meeting this February in Munich, which brought our team together for productive discussions and planning.

In this edition, we are also excited to spotlight Rebecca Kammerer's PhD project. Her research explores how individuals in prison use digital media to self-manage chronic illnesses—a thought-provoking topic that brings a unique perspective to the broader themes discussed within DISELMA.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce that the program for our ICA preconference "Boon or bane? The role of digital media in disease prevention and management" is now published. Registration is open until May 12, and we look forward to welcoming many of you there.

As always, thank you for staying connected—we are glad to have you with us!

Warm regards,



Constanze Rossmann

LMU Munich, Spokesperson of the DISELMA Research Unit



Recap OF OUR LATEST CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

70th annual DGPuK conference 2025 in Berlin

We are excited to share that Franca Singh and Julia Metag from the University of Münster (IP6: Reporting) successfully represented the DISELMA Research Unit at the 70th annual DGPuK conference 2025 in Berlin!

The team presented findings from their automated content analysis of 3,027 newspaper articles. Their study, titled *Between Fitbits and Bytes: Data Risks in Reporting on Digital Health Applications for Chronic Diseases*, examined how data protection risks are framed in media coverage of digital health technologies. The analysis focused on how the media shape public perceptions of data privacy in the context of chronic disease management. Using Structural Topic Modeling, the team identified eight primary topics in the media discourse, including "Digitalization and Data Protection". A subsequent manual content analysis of 367 articles revealed three dominant frames in media coverage:

1. The Skepticism Frame: This frame emphasizes the dangers of digital health technologies, particularly regarding privacy risks, suggesting that current regulatory measures are insufficient to protect users.

2. The Regulation Frame: This perspective acknowledges both the promise and the risks of digital health technologies, arguing that their success depends on robust regulation and secure infrastructures.

3. The Progress Optimism Frame: This frame presents digital health technologies as transformative and beneficial, with minimal focus on potential privacy risks.



We thank everyone who joined the panel and took part in the following discussion!

› [Read more about the DGPuK conference 2025 here!](#)



© Image by DGPuK

The results emphasize the importance of media coverage that not only highlights technological advancements but also critically examines the data privacy challenges accompanied by these advancements. Such balanced reporting is essential to foster an informed and nuanced public debate on the implications of digital health technologies.

Annual Meeting 2025 in Munich

This February, the DISELMA research unit gathered in Munich for our Annual Meeting—a three-day event filled with lively discussions, inspiring presentations, and collaborative planning. It was a great opportunity to reflect on our progress, exchange ideas, and look ahead to what's next.

The meeting kicked off with a series of engaging PhD project presentations by Anna-Lena Esser (IP4), Franca Singh (IP5), and Natalie Rödel (IP1), each offering unique insights into the diverse research being conducted within DISELMA. In the afternoon, we welcomed our Advisory Board and shared updates from the coordination team and individual projects (IP1–IP6), followed by a valuable feedback session that sparked thoughtful discussion.

Day two focused on deepening collaboration. After meetings between PIs and research associates, we came together for an open exchange to recap day one, discuss project synergies, and brainstorm ideas. Later in the day, our concept groups—Use, Framing, and Network—held focused meetings to align on ongoing work, and we wrapped up with updates on key organizational topics, including our ICA preconference in Denver.

The final day concluded with PhD presentations by Rebecca Kammerer (IP3) and Nariman Sawalha (IP2), both offering further insights into their ongoing research. Thanks to all participants for contributing to an inspiring and constructive meeting—we look forward to building on this momentum in the months ahead!



PhD Projects

IN DISELMA



Rebecca Kammerer
LMU Munich
Individual Project:
Healthcare

As a research associate and doctoral candidate in IP3: Healthcare, I have the opportunity to pursue my research interests and dedicate my dissertation to my core topic.

Physicians play a crucial role in the self-management of chronic diseases—whether by providing knowledge or recommending (or rejecting) digital self-management tools. The DISELMA Research Unit and IP3 assume free access to digital media—a condition not given in closed prisons. For security reasons, prison physicians have only limited access to digital media, while patients are deprived of all digital devices upon incarceration. This necessitates adapting existing health-related media use strategies in the context of chronic diseases.

“

What happens in a digital world like ours when physicians and patients with chronic illnesses have only limited or no access to digital media, as is often the case in closed prisons in Germany?

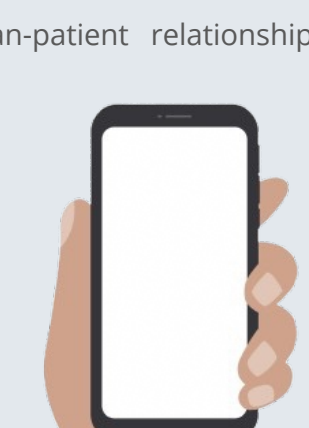
Against this background, I am expanding our individual project with a qualitative study, including semi-structured interviews with prison physicians and incarcerated patients and participant observation of prison doctors' daily work. This enables comparison with interviews and observations conducted in IP3: Healthcare outside of prison.

The goal is to gain a deeper understanding of access to digital media for the self-management of chronic diseases (Asthma, COPD, Type I/II Diabetes) both inside and outside of closed prisons. Additionally, I aim to analyze the health-related media use strategies of (prison) doctors and (incarcerated) patients with chronic illnesses. Furthermore, I seek to generate practical insights into the medical transfer process from digital to limited self-management in prisons. The study will explore the actual impact of digital media on the physician-patient relationship and contribute to the theoretical advancement of physician-patient relationship typologies concerning media use and technology access.

Finally, a comparative analysis of digital self-management strategies for chronic illnesses in freedom vs. closed prisons will provide insight into the potential benefits of unrestricted digital access for self-management.

PD Dr. habil. Claudia Riesmeyer (LMU Munich, IP3) and Prof. Dr. Constanze Rossmann (LMU Munich, IP2) supervise the dissertation.

I can't wait to get into the field soon and collect the first data.



Upcoming for the next months

08
MAY

DISELMA at the LMU Center for Advanced Studies (CAS)

Prof. Dr. Constanze Rossmann and PD Dr. Claudia Riesmeyer discuss the project's background, structure, and first findings at the CAS Showcase.

› [Event details](#)

DISELMA's Preconference ahead of the ICA 2025 in Denver:

Boon or bane?

The role of digital media in disease prevention and management

With the divisions: Health Communication, Communication and Technology, Mobile Communication

[Check the Program!](#)

JUNE
12,
2025

Keynote by
**Dr. Anne-Linda
Camerini**

© Image by Nils Huenerfuerst on Unsplash

› [Register here until May 12!](#)