



The Department of Health and ESTEVE will conduct a population-based health literacy survey

The purpose is to ascertain the capacity of individuals to access, understand and use health information and services to improve their health

This will allow implementing effective action to promote healthy habits and foster responsibility among people regarding their health

50% of Spaniards have limited health literacy skills that result in increased use of healthcare services and poorer adherence to treatment

17 January 2018.- The Department of Health of the Community of Madrid and ESTEVE have signed an agreement whereby both entities will collaborate to develop a population-based survey to ascertain the degree of health literacy. This will allow meeting the needs detected and thus conduct information, training and health education activities directed to patients and their relatives to improve health care and enhance the population's health and quality of life.

Health literacy is defined as the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions. Basically, it involves knowing how to interpret the information provided by healthcare providers, package inserts and information material, knowing how to search for reliable, high-quality health information, identifying when medical help should be sought, or using the available services and resources appropriately. Health literacy is increasingly being considered as a key social element directly involved in the health of both individuals and populations.

The results of the survey to be conducted jointly by the Department of Health and ESTEVE will allow establishing relationships between the degree of health literacy and the social determinants of the population's lifestyles and health levels, among other characteristics. This will prove highly useful to prepare the health policies that best meet the needs detected among the population and further allow the Department of Health to promote the adoption of healthy habits and lifestyles.

In this context, and within the scope of the Humanization Plan, the Department of Health has already set up the Madrid School of Health, a space for citizen participation to promote the adoption of healthy habits and lifestyles and foster co-responsibility among people in terms of health care and self-management of their diseases. This space also encourages the exchange of knowledge and experience and provides patients and their associations, caregivers, healthcare providers and the general population with high-quality information and in-person and online training on health.



Why a health literacy survey?

Several studies have shown an association between a low degree of health literacy and an increased use of emergency services and hospitalization, a poorer understanding of health-related concepts, and a poorer adherence to pharmacological treatments, particularly among the most vulnerable sections of the population.

According to the European Health Literacy Survey (HLS-EU), 12.4% and 35.2% of Europeans present with insufficient and problematic levels of health literacy, respectively. In Spain, “only” 7.5% of the population shows an insufficient level of health literacy, but up to 50.8% shows a problematic level, thus resulting in 58.3% of Spaniards with limited health literacy skills.

About ESTEVE

ESTEVE (www.esteve.com) is a leading chemical-pharmaceutical group in Spain with a strong presence worldwide. Founded in 1929 and presided over by Albert Esteve, the Company currently employs 2,473 people, has a presence in Europe, USA, Mexico and China, and had a sales revenue of 813 million Euros in 2016. ESTEVE is firmly committed to excellence and uses its best efforts to promote health and improve people’s quality of life. Research being ESTEVE’s hallmark, a portfolio of highly innovative projects ultimately aims to provide response to unmet medical needs. Because ESTEVE is a socially responsible Company, it ensures that all projects entered by it align with its CSR vision.

You may follow ESTEVE at Twitter’s link: [@ESTEVE_news](https://twitter.com/ESTEVE_news) and on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/esteve_news/

For more information, please contact:

Olga Cajal, Communication ESTEVE, Tel. 93 446 62 60, ocajal@esteve.es
M^a José Egea, Atrivia, Tel. 93 419 06 30, megea@atrevia.com