

QUALITATIVE HEALTH COMMUNICATION
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Editorial

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We are delighted to introduce the special issue on "**Approaches to Qualitative Health Communication: Theories, Methodologies and Methods**". This special issue aims to foster a deeper understanding of existing and new qualitative methodologies and explore their application in health communication research, by asking questions such as: How can we analyse health communication? Which theories, methodologies and methods are useful when aiming to understand health communication – and in what way?

The articles included in this special issue provide introductions to using specific methods for researching health communication phenomena.

Mesinioti highlights the strengths and limitations of multimodal discourse approaches and their contributions to health communication research. The article reviews four multimodal discourse approaches, comparing their theoretical bases, methodological implications, and analytical constraints. The approaches share a focus on multiple modes and their relationships in creating meaning but differ in their units of analysis: Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis focuses on semiotic resources, Mediated Discourse Analysis on action, Conversation Analysis on conversational order, and Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis on power and social structures.

Dahm introduces "approachability features" as a qualitative framework for analyzing healthcare interactions. The article draws on literature from interpersonal pragmatics, rapport management and healthcare communication, providing a step-by-step guide for researchers to adapt the framework to various contexts. The author provides illustrative examples based on two data sets; one on nursing bedside handover communication and one on role-played diagnostic interactions. The article contributes to research on effective healthcare communication, offering a structured, evidence-based analytical approach applicable across different health settings and topics.

Valdez explores the use of the vignette technique for data collection with special focus on linguistically and culturally diverse healthcare settings. The article reviews studies using the vignette technique and illustrates key methodological considerations. This scoping review is followed by an example of how a vignette is used in a specific research project, and readers are taken through the process of designing the vignette and using the vignette in practice. By use of the "Maria" vignette, the article highlights the strengths of vignettes, such as eliciting individuals' stories and experiences in high-risk and sensitive contexts.

In addition to these three special issue articles, Issue 4(1) also includes one non-thematic article by **Khindey et al.** who explore the diagnostic process and emotional experience of females with a late ADHD diagnosis. ADHD is often underidentified, underdiagnosed, and undertreated in females. Semi-structured interviews with nine females were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Participants experienced communication difficulties and emotional challenges pre-diagnosis, with diagnostic criteria often not reflecting their experiences. Authors conclude that in order to better support females with ADHD, also internal experiences of symptoms should be in focus, and how these might be communicated to health professionals.

Future issues

QHC will have a thematic issue (published every January) and an open call issue (published every August) as this will enable us to reach the depth of specific topics while also allowing for the vast span of research areas that the health communication field encompasses. We welcome ideas for future special issues: please contact us (qhc-journal@au.dk).

We are excited to have received many interesting abstracts for our next special issue on *Digital Health Communication*. Editors Maja Klausen & Maja Nordtug have been busy reading abstracts, and we are very happy to see that many of the arenas where digital health communication takes place are represented.

Enjoy Issue 4(1), and please submit your work for our future issues!

