SANT PAU PROJECT: URBAN KNOWLEDGE PARK ON HEALTH SCIENCES

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Abstract

The Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau (HSP) was created in 1401, in Barcelona. It is currently situated in several different Art Nouveau pavilions which have been declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO and are of patent cultural and tourist interest. The hospital is building a new site that will concentrate healthcare activity. The pavilions and surrounding gardens will host teaching and research activities, together with new cultural and social uses. HSP believes that, in the 21st century, a hospital must be regarded as a knowledge centre, which involves engaging in popularisation activities aimed at stimulating the scientific and medical culture of the population. This is why the hospital area will become a knowledge park on health sciences.

Key Words. Health & Medicine, Public Understanding of Science, Knowledge

Text

Context. The Hospital Santa Creu i Sant Pau (HSP), in Barcelona, is one of the most important university and research hospitals in Spain (3000 employees
and a catchment-area of 400,000 people). It is over six centuries old and its current site was declared World Heritage by UNESCO.

HSP is in a period of change as healthcare activity moves to a new building. This move will leave 18 Art Nouveau pavilions empty, that will be occupied by research and teaching activities (existing and new) and other activities which have not been carried out by the hospital so far: activities related to science popularisation and education and aimed at schools, tourists and the local population at large.

**Methodology.** HSP considers the change to be an opportunity, a chance to define what a 21st century hospital should be and it proposes a new way of understanding and managing a hospital. The Sant Pau Project (SPP) makes strategic use of the three pillars upholding HSP (healthcare, teaching and research) and adds a new one: putting its cultural heritage within reach of the people by means of the following:

1. promoting science-healthcare culture
2. integrating artistic and medical heritage in a popularisation project

The HSP Communication Department is responsible for defining and implementing the SPP and thus has been provided with resources and integrated within the management team as a strategic department.

This task is carried out with the involvement of social partners, both citizens and institutions: neighbourhood and patient associations, the city council, professional associations, etc. The final aim is to get all the vital forces involved in the project so they feel it to be their own.

**Results.** So far, the Communication Department at HSP has designed and initiated different popularisation programmes (schools, associations, general public and journalists), all of them integrated within the project of a Life and Health Museum that the hospital plans to open in the medium term.

Furthermore, an agreement has been signed with a local institution that is, in fact, in charge of co-ordinating the European Art Nouveau Route, an initiative aimed at reclaiming this heritage. In the case of HSP, the architectural relevance of the complex is not only for artistic reasons but also for functional: there are no other living examples of pavilion-structured hospitals, a design that answered to the criteria of medical science at the beginning of the 20th century.

The Domènech i Montaner Foundation has also been created to promote the study and diffusion of this extraordinary architect’s life and work. We have also started work on a sponsorship and patronage programme, and we are opening lines of business to generate some income from guided tours, school activities, renting spaces for films and advertising spots, etc.

**Conclusions.** HSP is the first large-scale hospital centre in Spain that has been designed within the knowledge society and it concludes that it should be
transformed into an urban health-sciences park. The SPP is a cultural project aimed at promoting culture among citizens, where culture is understood as a set of concepts and ideas that help us to understand the world we live in and participate in it.

References
