

**31st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SERVICES**

May 20-22, 2026 Slagthuset, Malmö, Sweden

Leggimi... al CRO:
a Fifteen-Year
Cultural-Wellbeing Partnership
Supporting Oncology Patients
Through Reading

Chiara Cipolat Mis, Chiara Fabrici

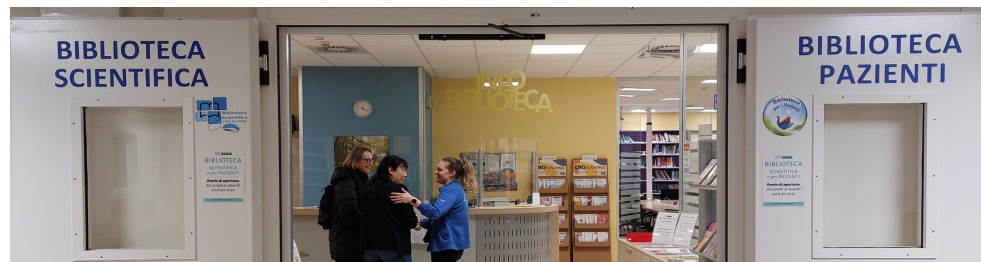


International Network
Health Promoting Hos
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HPH FVG
National Cancer Institute, IRCCS, Aviano, Italy



Patient Library: the CRO case



In 1998, a patient-oriented library was established at the National Cancer Institute of Aviano (CRO) as a complementary service to the Scientific Library. Initially, it combined access to medical information—particularly in oncology and pharmacology—with a space for reading and leisure.

Over time, this definition proved increasingly limited.

This project reflects the definition of health promoted by the World Health Organization as **“a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”**

Within this framework, the Patient Library plays a key role in **improving quality of life through information access, cultural engagement, emotional support, and human connection.**



Volunteer Reading Aloud Group

The Reading Aloud Volunteer Group is a team of trained volunteers engaged in read-aloud activities for patients in hospital wards. The group is supported by a structured and **continuous training system** that ensures the quality and sensitivity of its activities.



For **15** years, the group has carried out reading activities for patients, their families, and hospital staff in hospital wards, alongside a mobile library service—the so-called **bibliobus**—which promotes reading through book lending and sharing. The bibliobus operates both in day hospital areas and in the rooms of inpatients during their hospital stay.



Reading in Hospital: A Powerful Tool for Human-Centered Care



Reading aloud is conceived as an intentional and responsive practice, carefully adapted to the needs and reactions of patients.

Reading aloud is conceived as an intentional and adaptive practice aimed at fostering well-being, empathy, and human connection.

Reading aloud is a bodily and relational act in which voice, gaze, and presence are essential in creating meaningful human connection.

Books become mediators of shared experience, transforming clinical settings into **“laboratories of sociality”** where emotions and life narratives can be expressed and exchanged.





The Experience

This **temporal dimension** supports concentration and emotional immersion, creating conditions akin to a “flow” state, which can offer patients psychological relief from anxiety and illness-related stress.

Finally, the **relational dimension** is central: read-aloud practices foster empathy, listening, and a sense of community. Literature enables access to diverse human experiences, and shared reading encourages deeper emotional engagement.

In this sense, the value of reading in hospital lies not only in its content, but in the quality of presence it generates, helping to reduce isolation and reinforce a sense of belonging.



“Giving some pleasant emotions
is our aim, as well as helping
them distract themselves from
the illness and travel with their
imagination.”

Volunteer



Thank you!

Do you have any questions?

people@cro.it

<https://www.cro.sanita.fvg.it/it/biblioteca/>
www.croinforma.it



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