

# NEWSLETTER

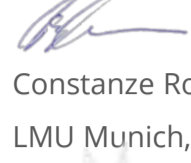
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Dear readers,

Welcome to our second newsletter of 2026! We are pleased to share recent highlights and upcoming activities from the DISELMA research unit. In June, we presented six papers at the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the International Communication Association in Cape Town providing a valuable opportunity to discuss our research with international colleagues. Furthermore, this issue highlights Nariman Sawalha's research visit to Veronika Karnowski and Janine Brill at TU Chemnitz and a new article by Franca Singh and Julia Metag, recently published in the Journal of Health Communication. We also celebrate an important milestone: Janine Brill successfully defended the first completed doctoral dissertation within DISELMA.

Looking ahead, we invite you to our research colloquium "DISELMA meets ComAI," featuring Juliane Jarke and colleagues from the University of Graz, alongside presentations from our research unit. Finally, enjoy a preview of our contributions to the upcoming European Communication Conference in Brno.

Warm regards,



Constanze Rossmann

LMU Munich, Spokesperson of the DISELMA Research Unit



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## CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

From June 4-8, members of DISELMA shared their research at the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA) 2026 in beautiful Cape Town, South Africa.

Our conference week kicked off with the preconference "Beyond the Norm(al): Media Use at the Intersection of Body, Mind, and Technology," where DISELMA contributed presentations on continued media use in diabetes contexts, the renegotiation of media use norms, and questions of selfhood and normalcy under lived illness experiences. At the main conference, our research spanned several divisions and interest groups – from in-situ perspectives on use to content analyses of chronic disease and climate change reporting and a meta-analysis on mHealth effects in self-management.



→ Read our full recap [here](#).



## HIGHLIGHTS and key findings



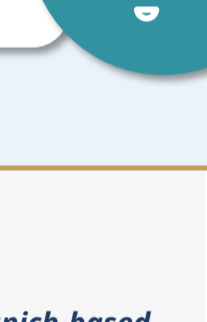
**IP1: Survey** How do people actually use their smartphones to manage diabetes day to day? IP1's in-situ survey identified four types of mobile-media situations in diabetes self-management.  
💡 Most use is routine and flexibly woven into everyday life – yet the rarer "beyond-routine" moments matter most to users. Routine self-management is also less positively acknowledged by others, who may read it as distracted phone use rather than care (a phubbing-like effect).



**IP2: Effects** How stable are mHealth use practices among people with diabetes? Drawing on a four-wave latent transition analyses, IP2 tracked continued use over nine months.  
💡 Use patterns – from non-use to all-in power use – stay largely stable. Diabetes-related worry and distress strongly shape whether people engage or disengage.



**IP3: Healthcare** What role do personal, social, and perceived norms play in the digital self-management of diabetes? IP3 explored this through semi-structured interviews with physicians and people living with diabetes.  
💡 The physician-patient relationship helps meet mutual expectations and avoid conflict – the key to successful digital self-management that lets patients live as "normal" a life as possible.

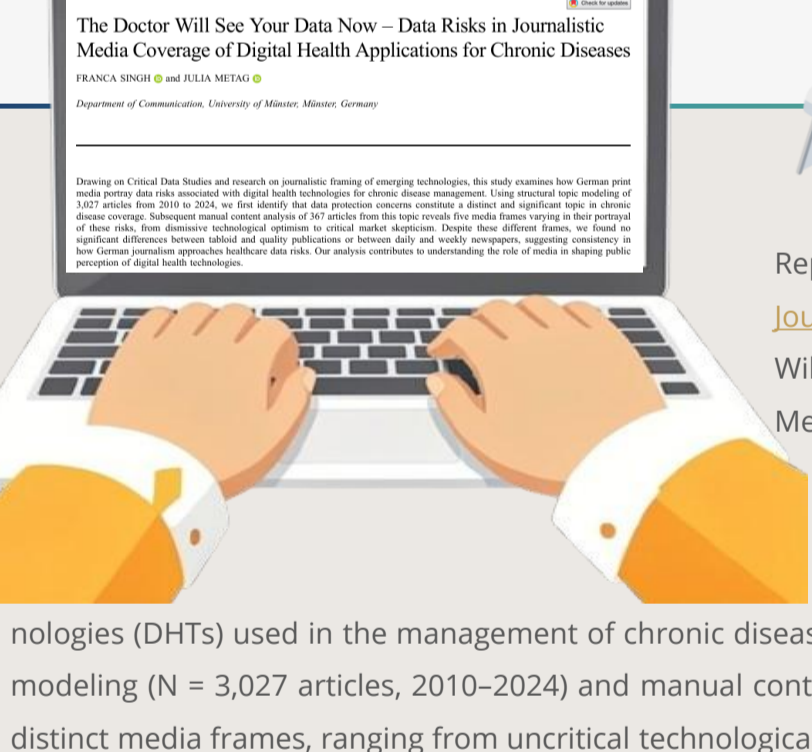


**IP6: Reporting** How do German media frame the link between chronic disease and climate change? IP6 analyzed 429 articles across nine media types.  
💡 German media cover climate-health connections through a narrow, risk-centered lens, dominated by health-severity and consequence frames, while solution-oriented perspectives and transparent uncertainty communication remain largely absent.

## PHD RESEARCH VISIT

From April 20 to April 28, Nari Sawalha, research assistant and PhD candidate in the Munich-based individual project "Effects" visited the Professorship of Media Communication at the Chemnitz University of Technology for a collaborative research exchange.

In April I visited Veronika Karnowski and Janine Brill from the individual project "Use" at the Chemnitz University of Technology for a research exchange. This short trip was a meaningful chance to connect our project work in person. Meeting daily, exchanging ideas, and discussing our data created a productive atmosphere. It was especially exciting to work on a conceptualization of an integrated paper of the DISELMA Concept Group Use, with a focus on the often-neglected dimension of emotional self-management. A further memorable highlight was attending Janine's dissertation defense – congratulations again, Janine! Experiencing this milestone firsthand and celebrating it together afterward made the visit all the more special. With sunny spring weather adding to the experience, my stay in Chemnitz was both productive and personally enriching. And I'm already looking forward to meeting everyone again in November for the [conference of the DGpuK Health Communication Division](#) hosted by Veronika and her amazing team.



## PUBLICATIONS

Franca Singh and Julia Metag (IP7: Reporting) have published a [new article in the Journal of Health Communication](#), titled "The Doctor Will See Your Data Now – Data Risks in Journalistic Media Coverage of Digital Health Applications for Chronic Diseases." In their study, they examined how German print media frame data risks associated with digital health technologies (DHTs) used in the management of chronic diseases. Drawing on a combination of structural topic modeling (N = 3,027 articles, 2010–2024) and manual content analysis (n = 367 articles), they identified five distinct media frames, ranging from uncritical technological optimism to alarm-driven calls for regulation.

#Open Access here!

🔍 A particularly striking finding: contrary to established patterns in technology journalism, no significant differences in framing were found across outlet types, publication frequency, or political orientation, suggesting a broadly shared "consensus framing regime" around health data in the German media landscape.

## PHD PROJECTS

### 🎉 Congratulations, Janine!

At the end of April, Janine Brill successfully defended her doctoral thesis, "Between Affiliation and Access: An Investigation of the Interrelationship Between Health Information and Access: Repertoires and Acculturation Trajectories of First-Generation Migrants in Germany." Her dissertation explores how the size, composition, and diversity of migrants' social networks shape their access to health information – combining online diary studies with qualitative interviews among international students and war-displaced Ukrainians living in Germany.

💡 Participants rely primarily on mobile devices – especially smartphones – and online sources when seeking health information, and their acculturation trajectories are often mirrored in the range and diversity of the sources available to them.

We're incredibly proud of you, Janine – congratulations on this milestone!



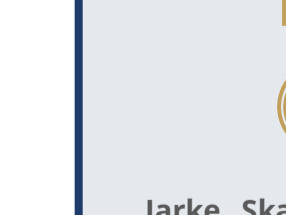
Janine Brill  
Chemnitz University of Technology  
Individual Project: Use

## UPCOMING

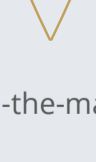
for the next months



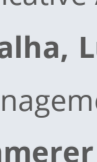
Join us for DISELMA's upcoming Scientific Research Colloquium: „ComAI meets DISELMA “



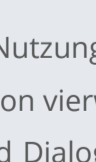
Friday, July 24, 2026



Language: German



10 - 11 am (CEST)



Find the Zoom link [here!](#)

Jarke, Skardelly, & Winterpacht: "Care Futures-in-the-making: Healthy Ageing through Communicative AI."

IP2: Sawalha, Lux, & Rossmann: "Kontinuierliche Nutzung mobiler Medien im Diabetes-Selbstmanagement: Eine Latent-Transition Analyse von vierwöchigen Paneldaten."

IP3: Kammerer &, Riesmeyer: "Zwischen Klicks und Dialog: Die Rolle der Arzt-Patienten-Beziehungen im digitalen Selbstmanagement chronischer Krankheiten."



## 11<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN COMMUNICATION CONFERENCE

8–11 SEPTEMBER 2026  
BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

## ECREA SHIFTING GROUNDS 2026

PATHS, CONNECTIONS, AND FUTURES

IP1: Brill, Wiedicke, Tominski, & Karnowski: The Use of Mobile Media in the Self-Management of Asthma and COPD: A Systematic Review.

IP3: Reifegerste, Esser, Kammerer, & Riesmeyer: Conflicts and coping of dilemmas of the "good patient" role in interpersonal communication networks of people with chronic diseases.

IP5: Gerling & Raupp: Digital health in practice: a multi-stakeholder survey on organisational roles and responsibilities.



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11. Jahrestagung der DGpuK-Fachgruppe Gesundheitskommunikation in Chemnitz

Gesundheit neu vernetzt: Von A wie Algorithmen bis Z wie Zyklus-Tracking

11.-13. November 2026

