In a year marked by the coronavirus pandemic in the media, CNIO’s Communications Department continuously reached out to patients, family members and society at large, sharing news of the Centre’s research activity and hitting the headlines with its stories.

The trend in media coverage of CNIO’s activities and papers was optimal: over 3,400 appearances in online and print newspapers and over 250 mentions on TV and radio.

In addition to specialist media — Diario Médico, Gaeta Médica, SINC News Agency —, the CNIO also attracted great interest from the top Spanish newspapers — El País, El Mundo, ABC, El Español, La Razón —, radio stations — RNE, Cadena Ser, Onda Cero, Radio 5, COPE, Capital Radio — and TV channels — TVE, La 2, La Sexta, Antena 3, Telecinco, Canal 24 Horas —, as well as online newspapers — Público, elDiario.es, El Imparcial —, general interest and popular magazines and radio stations — Soy Interesante, Cadena 100, Esquire, Hola, Jet Down, Cadena Dial, Elle — as well as websites from the USA, the UK, France, Mexico, Cuba and Uruguay, among others.

The new developments that received broadest coverage were the following: the combination of 2 drugs for the effective treatment of malignant mesothelioma in mice (Francisco X. Real, Cancer Research), the finding that type 2c diabetes can be an early sign of pancreatic cancer (Núria Malats, G3); the development of a simple, fast technology for more effective stem cell therapies in regenerative medicine (Oscar Fernández-Capetillo, The EMBO Journal), the new path to future gene therapy for age-related pulmonary fibrosis (María A. Blasco, Journal of Cell Biology); cell reprogramming with CRISPR gene editing to eliminate tumour cells without affecting normal cells (Sandra Rodríguez-Perales, Nature Communications); and the description of the molecular mechanism underlying melanoma and how it “tricks” the immune system into playing a role in its development (Marisol Soengas, Nature Medicine).

Moreover, Covid-19-related research at CNIO was covered by leading media channels, such as TVE (Comando Actualidad), El Mundo, La Sexta (El rojo vivo, El objetivo de Ana Pastor) and the Beijing-based news channel CGTN in Spain.

The works created by Calvo based on Arsuaga’s findings and ideas were shown in La 2 (Atención, obras), Canal 24 Horas (The hour cultural, La noche en 24 horas), TVE (Los desayunos de TVE), National Geographic, RNE (Por tres razones) and Radio 3 (Hoy empieza todo).

As we have done for the past few years, in 2020 we wanted to celebrate World Cancer Research Day on September 24 as well. Our fourth annual conference, organised with the support of “la Caixa” Foundation and held online only in 2020, was entitled “A New Era of Cancer Research. Towards the Engagement of the Entire Society”. It featured Francis Mojica as keynote speaker. Dr Mojica is a professor at the University of Alicante, known for his discovery of Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR), which later developed into the first widespread genome editing tool. His presentation, “Solving Conundrums, Fighting Ailments, Having Fun with CRISPR”, was followed by a panel discussion on the challenges of cancer research and the need for society to get involved to face those challenges. The panel featured Maria A. Blasco, CNIO Director and Head of the CNIO Telomeres and Telomerase Group, Luis Gonzaga-Paz-Ares, Head of the H12O-CNIO Lung Cancer Clinical Research Unit and Head of the Medical Oncology Service at 12 de Octubre University Hospital, Sandra Rodríguez-Perales, Head of the CNIO Molecular Cytogenetics Unit, and María Luisa Villafranca, breast cancer patient and President of the ROSAE Breast Cancer Association, a CNIO Friend.

Finally, in 2020 CNIO sealed its partnership with L’Oréal Group Spain to launch the #CNIOsLife campaign with La Roche-Posay on World Cancer Day in February. For 2 weeks, CNIO Friends was present in pharmacies all over the country. In addition, there was advertising in social media and emailing to clients, consumers, and the media, in an effort to engage new supporters for cancer research at the CNIO.
PRESS CLIPPINGS

1. Diario de León, January 14, 2020
2. Telecinco 2, TVE, January 15, 2020
3. El País Semanal, January 26, 2020
4. Gaceta Médica, January 27, 2020
5. La aventura del saber, La 2, February 4, 2020
7. El País, February 22, 2020
8. La hora cultural, Canal 24 Horas, February 27, 2020
9. ABC, February 27, 2020
10. Agencia SINC, March 3, 2020
11. La Vanguardia, April 6, 2020
12. Telemadrid 1, Telemadrid, May 13, 2020
13. COSN Noticias, COSN Español, May 20, 2020
14. Con Salud, July 2, 2020
15. El Mundo, July 5, 2020
16. Science Codex, July 8, 2020
17. Infoescola, July 16, 2020
18. MedicalXpress, August 10, 2020
19. Diario Médico, September 12, 2020
The engagement of our followers on CNIO’s social media channels is a good thermometer of our most impactful research news for society. In 2020, some of the highlighted topics — among many others — were science news, such as a new strategy to prevent the most aggressive tumours from generating resistance to chemotherapy (Marcos Malumbres, *Cancer Cell*, February); the confirmation that diabetes type 3c is an early manifestation of pancreatic cancer (Núria Malats, *Gut*, May); or the discovery of how melanoma deceives the immune system, increasing resistance to immunotherapy (Marisol Soengas, *Nature Medicine*, October). Other relevant news included items such as Maria A. Blasco and Marisol Soengas each being awarded an ERC Advanced Grant to tackle the immortality of cancer cells and metastasis; Óscar Fernández-Capetillo receiving an ERC Proof of Concept Grant to study a new treatment for childhood cancer; the launch of the spin-off Telomere Therapeutics by Maria A. Blasco (CNIO) and Fátima Bosch (UAB); the recruitment of Geoff Macintyre and María Casanova-Acebes… and, of course, the renewal of our accreditation as “Severo Ochoa” Centre of Excellence.
The Minister of Science and Innovation, Pedro Duque, and the Director of the National Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII), Raquel Yotti, visited the CNIO facilities to get first-hand information on several projects being carried out to study Covid-19. Maria A. Blasco outlined the progress of these projects to the Minister and, in addition, informed him about the CNIO’s working policies during the lockdown, May 4, 2020.

José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, former President of the Spanish Government, participated in the seminar series of the CNIO Office for Women in Science (WISE). Under the title “Science and Politics” of his online talk, he called for the creation of a high-level commission to propose projects to be funded by European recovery funds because of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. To the vision of science to improve life expectancy and health, the former president wanted to add the role that science plays as an element of coexistence based on principles and values. He thus stressed that the 21st century must be decisive in favor of gender equality, September 15, 2020.

With the support of “la Caixa” Foundation, we celebrated World Cancer Research Day with an online event entitled “A new era of cancer research: towards the engagement of the entire society.” Francis Mojica, Professor at the University of Alicante, gave the keynote speech “Solving enigmas, battling disease, delighting in CRISPR”. After his talk, a roundtable discussion was held with the participation of Maria A. Blasco, Luis Paz-Ares, Sandra Rodríguez-Irech, and María Luisa Villalancis. September 24, 2020.

Do we really understand cancer in terms of the molecular processes underlying it? Do we know how a patient’s socio-environmental factors affect this understanding? Four scientists (Maria A. Blasco, Luis Paz-Ares, Miquel Porta, and Fernando Valladares) and five philosophers (Arantza Etxeberria, Antonio Diéguez, Marta Bertolaso, Anna Estany, and Elena Casetta) participated in a debate on this question in the online “Workshop on Philosophy, Science and Medicine: socio-environmental factors of health and disease” organized by the CNIO with the support of the Banco Sabadell Foundation, November 24, 2020.