Objective

Epidemiological reports from around the world suggest that more people than ever before are living with (especially chronic) diseases. As a consequence, sustained efforts to reduce morbidity and mortality rates have been joined by systematised efforts to improve the lives – the quality of life – of those living with disease in ways that are measurable and auditable.

VITAL will focus on the making of ‘quality of life’. While social studies of medicine have of late been marked by a ‘bio-turn’, it is apparent that within contemporary medicine, life is envisaged as much more than cellular and molecular activity; it is also a social activity and a personal experience. Not only is life sustained, it is also lived. In recent decades, morbid living – living with disease – has come to be the object of novel forms of knowledge, expertise, measurement and management while also generating new medical practices and attendant ways of relating to oneself.

VITAL suggests a shift in attention from the ways in which the social sciences have previously studied morbid living and related issues of quality of life. Rather than continue longstanding efforts to understand how people cope with disease or to refine definitions and instruments for measuring the quality of life of the sick, in VITAL we will empirically study the co-production of ‘quality of life’ within healthcare through four ethnographically-grounded studies of how ‘quality of life’ is assembled, mobilised, negotiated and practiced in concrete medical settings. The four studies will focus on how knowledge about living with
disease is assembled and mobilised, on the one hand, and how morbid living is negotiated and practiced on the other.

The key outcomes of VITAL will be theoretical advancement of understandings of vitality in the 21st century beyond molecular biology and methodological innovation to facilitate empirical study of co-production processes that involve social science knowledge and practice.

Field of Science

attention
mortality
molecular biology
social sciences

Programme(s)

H2020-EU.1.1. - EXCELLENT SCIENCE - European Research Council (ERC)

Topic(s)

ERC-StG-2014 - ERC Starting Grant

Call for proposal

ERC-2014-STG

See other projects for this call

Funding Scheme

ERC-STG - Starting Grant

Host institution
KOBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET
Norregade 10
1165 Kobenhavn
Denmark

Activity type  EU Contribution
Higher or Secondary  € 1 499 770
Education Establishments

Website
Contact the organisation

Beneficiaries (1)

KOBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET
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