

The reader has, in his or her hands, a special issue of our magazine. Since its foundation, **Compartir** has echoed the latest news in the co-operative sector in highly varied professional and social areas, at both national and international levels. We have provided punctual information on the Espriu Foundation activities as well as on developments in the health co-operative sector worldwide, but always setting these advances in the wider context of co-operatives and the social economy in today's world. This issue of the magazine is the exception that proves the rule: it is entirely dedicated to expounding the current situation of the health co-operatives sector, conceived from the imagination and work of Doctor Josep Espriu.

His imagination and work are varied and his story complex, so we have opted to follow a chronological line in this special issue. It begins with a long interview with Dr. Espriu, placing the emphasis on the first moments of his commitment to social medicine and on the emergence of Espriuan co-operative thinking throughout the long years of the creation of a healthcare network. The line continues with exploration of two thematic blocks, the first with relation to the Grup Assistència, the federation which today brings together physicians' and healthcare users' co-operatives in the province of Barcelona. The second block concerns the Grupo ASISA and explains the life of this physicians' co-operative operating in the rest of Spain and of the medical insurance company with which it is associated. The final chapter is dedicated to the International Co-operative Alliance and the International Health Co-operative Organisation and demonstrates the work carried out by the Espriu Foundation in promoting health co-operatives on an international level.

In a constant effort to dignify medicine and ensure the participation of both physicians and users in the management of healthcare, Doctor Espriu often says, "Medicine involves two people and both have the right to their opinion". The reader, being in one category or the other, now has the word.