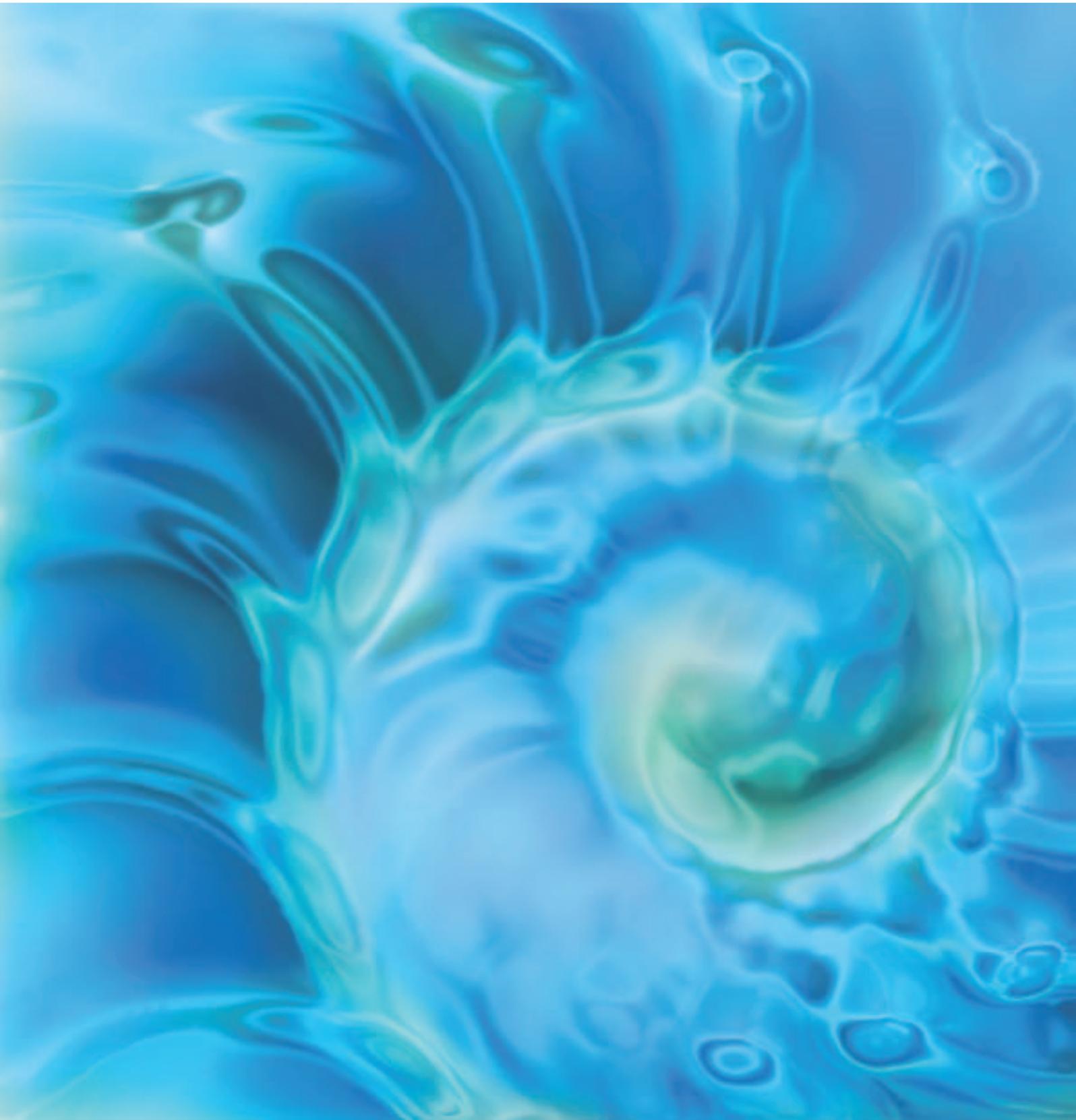


The "THERMAE" COMMUNICATION CHARTER



COMMUNICATING THE **THERMAE**

MEDIA, SCIENCE, AND SOCIETY FOR APPROPRIATE AND RESPONSIBLE INFORMATION

Riolo Terme, October 23, 2011



PREAMBLE

The Convention “**Communicating the thermae. Media, Science, and Society for appropriate and responsible information,**” promoted and organized by the **School for Specialization in Thermal Medicine (Hydrotherapy) (Director Prof. Umberto Solimene) of the Milan University, in co-operation with Terme di Riolo**, took place on October 21-23, 2011 at the Congress Centre of Riolo Terme. Speakers included entrepreneurs, thermal physicians and researchers, specialized operators, and representatives of the media and of the local, regional, and national institutions.

Participants discussed about the state of the art of the thermae in Italy, the role they play in health, wellbeing, and thermal tourism, and the scientific and technological progress that suggests ongoing updates also for the thermal world. A renewed and greater effort is therefore needed to improve information, communication, and the promotion of the thermae and of their therapeutic and wellness services.

ONE RESPONSE TO MULTIPLE NEEDS

The Thermae Communication Charter is aimed at addressing multiple needs, highlighted in the lectures and in the debate, on a few issues that call for consideration:

- the thermal treatment and wellness system is a millennia-old natural wealth and part of the scientific, economic, and social culture of the Country, which deserves being valorized for its unique identity;
- any abuse of the name and the promotion of services that boast thermal characteristics, though being consciously devoid of any, and may thus cause confusion in people and/or actual unfair or misleading behaviours, should be opposed with great determination;
- the provisions of the law for reorganization of the sector (Italian Law No. 323/2000) provided some certainties for the implementation of the thermal health welfare system of people, promoting public-private partnerships to pursue the goals of the law. Now, ten years later, it should be updated to take into account changes in the context and the outcome of scientific and technological progress;



- the appropriateness of the thermae welfare system within the existing national healthcare policies, based on long-standing tradition, on thermal scientific research, and on profitable public-private interaction (Companies, State, Regions), is confirmed;
- ongoing update of thermae communication (towards the public and physicians), taking into account the potentials of the new media and the greater awareness of people with respect to holistic-natural therapies;
- the commitment of Federterme, Italian Ass. of Thermae, through FORST (the Foundation for thermal scientific research) for recognition of, and support to the value of scientific research for validation of the therapeutic efficacy of thermal treatments; the recognition of the central role of qualified training at all professional levels;
- information, communication, advertising, and the feedback of users should be consistent with the specificities of thermalism (medical hydrotherapy);
- support to the promotion of a corporate culture;
- recognition of the unique role of the individual media, in view of their integrated use, for dissemination of a culture of proper thermal practice and of the relevant imagery;
- the integrated valorization of natural thermal resources with other local resources;
- promoting the awareness of the diversities and specificities of individual thermal waters and of their scientifically proven healing properties;
- promoting ongoing dialogue between the research and corporate world and communicators/media;
- ensuring appropriate resources for thermae's communication.



PRINCIPLES & GUIDELINES

for improved information and communication of/for the thermae

The need was recognized to provide the following voluntary behavioural principles/guidelines, aimed at improving thermal communication:

- 1** Aim communication at the need to improve comprehensive public information;
- 2** Confirm the central role of, and enhance the medical and scientific value of thermal and hydrotherapeutic treatments;
- 3** Provide correct, comprehensive, and appropriate information to the media, taking into account the specificities of communication tools and formats;
- 4** Provide for training initiatives aimed at promoting ongoing updates through a dialogue between scientific research, companies, and communication;
- 5** Include updating modules on new information technologies in training courses for thermal physicians;
- 6** Promote communication of the value of the Italian and European thermae's offering of matching the prevalent size and the organizational specificities of companies in the Country.

Riolo Terme, October 23, 2011

