Being chronically ill is not pleasant. Besides feeling mentally and/or physically unwell, you’re also forced to spend a lot of time in the hospital. Many patients found it therapeutic to write down their experiences with their illness and healthcare, a lot of which were published.

One patient, Coleta Platenkamp, started collecting these stories after suffering from a chronic illness herself. This collection grew until it consisted of nearly 4000 items, ranging from not only books, but also games, videos, blogs, podcasts, etc. Currently, the collection contains over 8000 items (with a little more than 6000 of those being books).

The Erasmus University has become the custodian of the collection ‘Experiences of patients with chronic illnesses’ as it would fit well within their research and education. It is the second most requested collection of the University Library, mostly by EUR students and staff. However, 24% of loans come from members from other library memberships or Interlibrary loan. Outside visitors can also get access to the collection via a day pass.

The EUR, specifically the Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management (ESHPM), continues to use this amazing collection for research and education, and expands it every day in the hopes that it may help ensure healthy lifestyles and promote well-being for all ages.