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## Issue 14: From the Guest Editor

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Issue 14: From the Guest Editor



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Hello. I am Rafael Obregon, Associate Professor, School of Media Arts and Studies and Director, Communications and Development Studies Program at Ohio University. I speak to you today as the Guest Editor of the 14th issue of the Online Journal of Space Communication, which is dedicated to the role of satellites in public health.

Recent events have reminded us of how global are matters relating to public health today. Whatever happens in the most remote corners of our world can impact lives in neighborhoods anywhere. As the world grows smaller, the result of high-speed telecommunication networks, the possibilities to use information and communication technologies to respond to public health challenges have also greatly improved.

While space-based satellites have been used in many different ways over the last 20 years, today they are an integral part of public health services delivery. Satellite networks now give us greater coverage and more portable earth equipment can insure more rapid response to health threats. These platforms are being used to not only deliver healthcare but to facilitate communication and education.

This issue is roughly divided into three parts. The first part is historical and contextual, allowing readers to look back at policy matters affecting implementation of telemedicine and related applications, especially those interventions that seem suited for satellite capability and infrastructure. The large middle part consists largely of original contributions, papers and reports that we hope will add to our broader understanding of the role that satellite communication is playing in public health. In the last part, issues are raised that we need to look at as the Internet and satellite technologies develop over the next few years.

I would like to thank every person who has contributed in one way or the other to putting together this issue of the journal. I would like to thank in a very special way my colleague Don Flournoy, who invited me to coordinate this edition of the Journal. We are looking forward to receiving reader and contributor comments over the next few months. If you have an article or perspective you would like to

see included that will make this report on Satellites and Health more complete, please do not hesitate to communicate with us.

We believe that this issue of the Journal represents a small but meaningful contribution to our understanding of the expanding applications of satellites that can transform, in positive ways, public response to health challenges around the world. If better knowledge can help to improve the lives of families and children in the new millennium, then we will have served our purpose.

Thank you for your interest.

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