

## POJ DENTAL AND ORAL CARE

### Editorial

# Global Change and the Dentistry. A Whish from Italy and DoctOral App for the New Open Dental Journal “POJ Dental and Oral Care”

**Giuseppina Campisi**

Professor of Oral Pathology and Medicine, University of Palermo, Italy

**\*Corresponding Author:** Giuseppina Campisi, Professor of Oral Pathology and Medicine, University of Palermo, Dept. Di.Chir.On.S.; Via L. Giuffrè 5, 90127 Palermo, Italy, Tel: +390916552236, Email: campisi@odonto.unipa.it

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It is with great enthusiasm that I write to you at the launch of POJ Dental and Oral Care. And I would like to tell you a little Italian story, I think may interest you. It is the story of my generation, graduates of dentistry, fifty years old who have studied from childhood on books and are now catapulted - I would say nicely - in the digital world. Sometimes we are also a little childish and amazed at the miracles of technology. To avoid being selfish or capricious, there is perhaps a remedy: to use any technological advancement to improve the oral health of human beings and with it the quality of their lives. The growing complexity of diagnostic tests in general has given a growing role to the information technology. In fact, both the huge amount of data to handle and the demand for a second reading/opinion process can be easily and effectively guided by Expert Information Systems. That's why digital technologies are rapidly coming to the medical industry. In particular, in the field of Imaging Diagnostics, the introduction of digital technology is causing profound changes in workflow management in hospital departments and in the diagnostic potential offered to the specialist physicians. Just think about the daily medical use of Diagnostic for Images or, closer to the clinical semeiotics, that of digital photography, as a tool for recording and comparing the patient's mucosal lesions, gums and dental lesions. No modern dentist can refrain from doing it in his clinical practice as well as in his academic activity. But, it does not end there, digital images can now serve to others as well. We, as a research group (Giuseppina Campisi, Olga Di Fede, Vera Panzarella) from the University of Palermo (Italy), are trying to contribute in this direction to an up-to-date Oral Medicine. How? Through DoctOral, a free App [1,2], available on app stores (iOS and Android), that is a clinical tutorial in English and Italian language.

By helping dentists and physicians from all over the world, as well as dentistry and medicine students, the goal is using the clinical images they have performed, previously or in real-time,

on oral mucosal lesions to independently diagnose a suspicion of a given disease, especially oral cancer [3]. This would be because of the possibility of comparing their clinical images with some standards, but mainly through the open-access use of clinical algorithms (based on the morphology or color of the lesion) that can guide colleagues through the various diagnostic paths. Then, from algorithms and diagrams on printed-paper, we went to the digital ones with the ability to scroll and view all the algorithms, and the same is true for the descriptive outlines present and related to the most common diseases.

We think and hope that we can also have fun, love oral medicine and at the same time learn or at least give courage and support, with this external and free help, to our diagnostic hypotheses, even a long way from University hubs. And all this thanks to digital and open access. So, how to go back from digital to paper? Impossible.

Another piece of the story that I want to tell you is that after testing the App in Italian and having perceived the enormous potential, we attempted its use even in the dental management of special patients, as can be defined those who are at risk of Medication Related Osteonecrosis of Jaws (MRONJ). As tutorial in dental prevention of MRONJ, that is a potentially severe, destroying adverse reaction to antiresorptive agents (i.e. bisphosphonates and denosumab), and / or anticancer targeted therapy with antiangiogenic activity [4]. It typically presents with areas of necrotic jawbone exposed through the oral mucosa or facial skin. However, it is possible to observe cases with no sinus tracts, pain, fractures, and tooth mobility/loss, and non-exposed MRONJ can mimic dental infections and the diagnosis can be challenging.

A huge recent body of literature has dealt with its definition, its diagnosis and therapy, as well as its prevention; the latter is the most important task, and in Italy, information and dissemination

programs have been implemented by the Ministry of Health, which in April 2014 has issued up-to-date recommendations on this topic [5], and by the Italian Societies of Oral Pathology and Medicine and of Maxillo-facial Surgery [6].

What is, for this task, the DoctOral app's input? The open-access consultation of guided paths and based on the above-mentioned recommendations, and this not in a generic manner (as you read a book or table and browse it, look for the case-patient in question), but ad hoc, starting exactly from the characteristics of the single patient who is currently undergoing a consultation with a colleague, anywhere in the world; either this patient has already taken or will assume one or more of the drugs associated with the risk of ONJ. This way of proceeding has determined the customization of prevention procedures along with their procedural simplification.

So, we can only aspire for a mindful progress, hope that young people, born and raised in the digital world, will not lose the benefits of our efforts and transition from old to new world.

With regard to this new promising specialist journal, the wish is that it can afford spaces for oral medicine/special care and for what of new and interesting will move in the world of clinical and experimental research.

**Keywords:** Digital dentistry, Oral medicine, Oral mucosa, Oral cancer, Osteonecrosis of jaws, App

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