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Letter to the editor

Dental journals and coronavirus disease (COVID-19): A current view



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What does a scientific journal do? In a recent paper, Rubin et al. [1], tells us: *At the Journal, we work with authors to craft their messages to provide readers the best information from rigorous medical practice and basic science. The process can take time, with careful peer review, editing, and graphics often involving multiple rounds of revision. This work fulfills our mission: to provide our readers with the highest-quality information to guide the care of patients, and continues, But some situations call for a different approach. The current outbreak of coronavirus infection is a threat to the health of the public and a breaking news story that changes hour by hour. We can eventually take a long view of how to manage and prevent epidemics, but today practitioners and public health authorities need actionable information as soon as possible. And concludes the article, the rapid pace of infectious disease outbreaks can be frightening. Our aim is to transparently bring readers the best information available in a highly expedited manner.*

The World Health Organization (WHO) qualitative and quantitative indicators are daily updating the COVID-19 pandemic (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>), to better understand, disseminate and guide people. Electronic pages of scientific dissemination increase the publications on COVID-19, highlighting the papers found in PubMed (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>). As of March 1st, 2020, outside China, another 58 countries had confirmed COVID-19 cases. Now, on March 18th, there are already more than 150 countries, in addition to China. In the world we have already 179,111 confirmed cases and 7426 deaths (https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200317-sitrep-57-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=a26922f2_4).

The causative agent for COVID-19 was identified from throat swab samples conducted by the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CCDC) on 7th January 2020, and was subsequently named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The disease was named COVID-19 by the WHO [2]. Most SARS-CoV-2 infected patients have developed mild symptoms such as dry cough, sore throat, and fever, and the majority of cases have spontaneously resolved. However, some cases have developed various fatal complications including organ failure, septic shock, pulmonary oedema, severe pneumonia, and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) [3].

Thus, even in a short time, from December to the present, a significant amount of information about the pandemic for COVID-19 has been generated. However, few manuscripts are found in dental journals so far [4,5]. Meng et al. [4], based on their experiences, introduced essential knowledge about COVID-19 and nosocomial infection in dental settings, providing recommendations and management protocols for dental practitioners and students in (potentially) affected areas.

Dental patients and professionals can be exposed to pathogenic microorganisms and dental care settings invariably carry the risk of 2019-nCoV infection due to the specificity of its procedures, which involves face-to-face communication with patients, frequent exposure to saliva, and blood, and the handling of sharp instruments [5].

Considering the changes and limitations of locomotion, technical training, exchanges and cancellations of scientific congress, as observed in the main dental research congress recently (<https://www.iadr.org/2020iags>), scientific papers become even more important for updating and disseminating scientific knowledge.

Recently, Holden Thorp published an editorial entitled: *Time to pull together*. This text highlights that, it is now hard to imagine a world that is not permanently changed by coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). We do not know whether this is an event like 9/11 or the 2008 global financial crisis-where life will mostly go back to the way it was-or whether the institutions and practices of the future will transform in ways that we cannot yet imagine. The success of the world's scientists-along with strong political and social leadership-will determine which scenarios unfold, so it is time to focus on what we can all do to help [7].

Considering the significant number of dentists around the world working at this time, it is necessary to reflect and act quickly to better enable them in dental treatment in the face of the challenges of the pandemic of COVID-19. We must remember that the history of epidemics offers considerable advice, but only if people know the history and respond with wisdom [8].

Authors' contributions

H. Martelli-Junior contributed to conception, design, data acquisition and interpretation, drafted and critically revised the manuscript. R.A. Machado, D.R.B. Martelli and R.D. Coletta contributed to conception, design, data acquisition and interpretation and critically

revised the manuscript. All authors gave their final approval and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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