

From the Editor's Desk



The present issue is primarily dedicated to a complex, but nevertheless increasingly pertinent topic termed patient-centered outcomes. After taking the necessary time to thoroughly read and assimilate the content of the three feature articles, you will certainly understand why the previous Editorial Board of Forum Implantologicum strongly recommended that this rather novel and clearly fundamental field of clinically relevant scientific investigation be addressed in one of the future issues.

During recent decades, dental medicine in general and clinical implant dentistry in particular have been marked by numerous developments, and many new treatment modalities have emerged. Research has focused on validating this evolution, ideally in the form of prospective randomized controlled trials (RCTs) performed in accordance with the principles of evidence-based medicine. Well-structured outcome-oriented clinical research was and still is clearly the

backbone in this endeavor, as it has largely contributed to establishing well-documented treatment protocols along with their associated biomaterials.

However, more recently, the dental research community has become increasingly aware of the paramount importance of an additional element, the so-called patient-centered outcome (PCO) domain. This term encompasses several distinct dimensions, all of which focus on the patient's individual needs and perceptions. This complex set of issues is far from being trivial. Our gratitude goes to the three highly qualified teams of authors, all of them from the US, for addressing the various notions and questions that are relevant in this particular context. Firstly to Drs. Inglehart, Sheridan and Giannobile (University of Michigan), who have concisely developed and formulated both the definition and general perspective relative to the theme. Secondly to Dr. Steven Eckert (Editor-in-Chief of IJOMI), who has specifically focused on the pertinence and significance of PCO in the field of implant dentistry. Finally to Drs. Wilson, Higginbottom, Valderrama and Pope (University of Texas, San Antonio and Baylor College, Dallas), who have evaluated the implementation of PCO in daily clinical practice.

In my personal understanding, pertinent PCO research clearly provides the clinician with a set of additional key decision-making criteria when it comes to establishing the optimal, comprehensive treatment plan for a given patient presenting with a number of complex problems. While we all agree that by definition any therapeutic intervention in dental medicine should only be undertaken if it predictably contributes to the promotion of long-lasting oral function, subtle and

often overlooked patient-related factors may ultimately determine which among the possible treatment modalities available today is the most appropriate for that individual.

In order to add a strong clinical element to this issue of Forum Implantologicum that might otherwise have been perceived as being a bit text-intensive and overly theoretical, we are particularly happy that Drs. Teo and Chang (National University of Singapore) agreed to put some of the conceptual aspects described in the three articles into a clinical context in the form of a multidisciplinary case report presenting a patient suffering from oligodontia.

According to the tradition, the remainder of this issue is dedicated to the popular Presentation and Photo Tips, discussing new features of PowerPoint 2016 on the one hand, and giving an overview of dental photography lenses on the other. Once again Drs. Brody Hildebrand, Frank Lozano and William Martin succeeded in providing highly pertinent information in an attractive, easy-to-read format.

While finalizing this issue we received the sad news that Honorary ITI Fellow Professor Samuel Steinemann had passed away. Not only has the ITI community lost a great man, but many of us have also lost a close personal friend. Given his extraordinary contributions in the field of implant dentistry – he was the father of SLA and SLActive – the Editorial Board has included a special tribute to him in this issue and extends its condolences to his family.

Urs Belser
Editor-in-Chief