

Looking Back to Say Goodbye

Dear Readers,

When the first issue of Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry was published in 2003, it was the result of a well-orchestrated plan which included the founding of the European Society of Preventive Dentistry (ESPD). Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry was clearly intended as the official journal of the ESPD, with the idea of creating a platform to promote the concept of prevention. In the following 13 years, Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry has done far better than the ESPD, which was hit with the cancellation of its first annual meeting due to lack of attendance. Later, it became more or less dormant and has not revived since.

Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry, which was managed by three Editors – P. Holmstrup, N.P. Lang and myself – became a well-esteemed international journal right from its inception and a few years later obtained an impact factor as well. For more than 12 years, I have been involved in bearing the responsibility with my fellow Editors, and since last year as Acting Editor with a new crew: P.E. Petersen and A. Sculean. To deliver a high quality product to you the readers, Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry uses an elaborate online peer-review system, designed by Andy Beare, allowing us to manage the large amount of manuscripts (approximately 400/year) and select the novel, interesting and scientifically well done ones, in keeping with the words of Andreas Linde: ‘Nothing is scientifically shown or proven before it has been published in a scientific journal with a peer review system, so one can critically judge what was done, how it was done, and evaluate how solid it is.’

In a world largely governed by financial concerns, publishing high-quality journals is a tough business, one that is under constant pressure and requires continuous changes. These changes include the views of Editors as well as publishers, and often do

not head in the same direction. I think that severe changes are needed for Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry, which will require new ideas adapted to the new information-acquisition behaviour of our customers and readers. I clearly see the trend towards electronic publication as well, similar to developments in the office or banking world, where the majority of processes are run digitally. Having personally experienced the financial pressures in education, research, publishing and product development, my “dream” of the future (with reference to Martin Luther King’s famous speech in 1963) is that peer-reviewed journals must remain the instrument to disseminate information that is as close to the truth as is possible in science. These journals must function independently of lobbying pressure and having sufficient resources to do so. The current developments tend to shift the financial burden from the reader to the authors, which I do not like at all. Sustaining the idea that knowledge should be accessible to everyone will necessitate independent funding of peer-reviewed journals by non-invested organizations (e.g. foundations or state institutions).

Based on these thoughts, I have decided to step down as Editor-in-Chief of Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry, thus making this issue the last one produced under my responsibility.

Before I say goodbye, I feel strongly obliged to thank all those who have contributed to the success of Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry: My Co-Editors, the reviewers, the authors, and you the readers, who have created the financial base for Oral Health & Preventive Dentistry. Finally, I want to thank the one person within the Quintessence Publishing company who together with me has performed the difficult task of finally executing our commitment to high quality: Kathleen Splieth as the language editor.

Sincerely yours



Prof. J.-F. Roulet