

EDITORIAL

New year, new start

Looking back

As we look back to 2022, our first year as your editors, we want to start by thanking you, the readers, for your trust. We hope you enjoyed the first four issues of IJED with us just as much as we did. It has been a beautiful journey, especially for the three of us getting to know each other better and sharing wonderful moments planning and setting our vision into reality. It has been truly enriching putting our heads together, not only as we all come from different backgrounds, but more importantly, as we share the same values.

Clearly, without the great preparatory support and foresight given to us by Alessandro Devigus in the year leading up to the transition, none of this could have happened so flawlessly, and we also want to thank him for his fantastic support during the transitional period.

Finally, being able to work with such a supportive review board and editorial team is a great privilege for us, and we cannot stress enough their role in the success story of the journal. They not only set the highest standards to improve the submitted manuscripts, when needed, but also submit their own excellent work to be published in our journal.

We will continue to work hard to ensure that the IJED maintains its unique position and guarantee an impeccable and timely manuscript turnover for all the authors entrusting us with their manuscripts.

2023 challenges: where did the dental teams go?

The COVID-19 pandemic left no stone unturned in its global shutdown of businesses and services. Dentistry was certainly no exception; it was actually one of the hardest hit professions, with massive clinic closures due to the spread of the coronavirus. In 2020, most dental teams were sent home, practices only catered to emergency services, and employment in dentistry dropped by half. That year looked particularly gloomy until something short of a miracle happened: we bounced back.

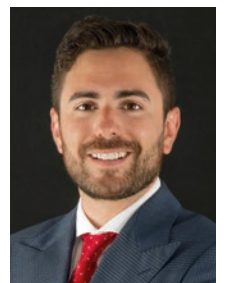
Dental professionals were better prepared than governments thought, and were able to use protective measures in order to arrest disease transmission and keep their staff and patients safe. Most countries saw patients return regularly and confidently to



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Why a Velcro plant on the cover?

The inventor, George de Mestral, discovered burdocks on his clothing and in his dog's fur during a walk in 1948. He carefully removed them and examined them under his microscope. In the process, he discovered that the burdock had tiny elastic hooks. It took him another 10 years before he was able to imitate this hooking method to invent the Velcro fastener.

their dental practices in 2021, and patient numbers recovered. But what about the laid-off dental staff?

With patient numbers on the rise and the subsequent practice growth, one would expect that the staff returned accordingly, right? Well, not necessarily. The rate of hiring of dental professionals has remained strikingly low and has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Many dental specialists and dental hygienists feel that dental practices are unsafe, do not offer sufficient incentives, do not include flexible remote working possibilities like their business peers do, and certainly do not meet their expectations of increased pay to cope with the unprecedented inflation. This situation translates into practices being short-staffed, with the workforce relying on versatility and multi-tasking, and sometimes finding themselves overworked.

Dental practices need to be creative in setting up a balanced working environment, strengthening team spirit, and building strong collective personal and professional growth. It might currently be difficult to be competitive from a financial perspective in terms of job offers and job retention, but the focus should be on continuous education, teledentistry, patient-centered excellence, and skillset growth to retain present staff and provide the incentive for new staff to join dental teams.

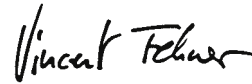
Looking forward

We started our adventure as editors last year by proposing a cup of espresso as the home page: a clinical case of excellence; a product of masterful teamwork. From this year, we want to offer you a glass of red wine on the last page. A sort of cameo for our readers: a brief appearance of a world-renowned dentist who will share a personal secret with us. Even the best sometimes make mistakes, and what makes us true experts is the capability to manage errors and complications. In the next issue, we will reveal the first professional who has the courage to discuss the case that usually no one would share in a magazine, during a congress, or on social networks, where perfection always seems to be the norm.

We wish our readers a wonderful start to the new year together, full of projects, experiences, and passion.

Enjoy reading!

Vincent Fehmer



Alfonso Gil



Martina Stefanini

