Professor Dr Corneliu Amariei

Editors-in-Chief,

*Journal of Oral Health and Dental Management*

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Dear Drs Corneliu,

Please find enclosed our manuscript, “Investigation of viral infectious diseases in dental and oral-maxillofacial surgery patients: is screening for infectious diseases necessary?” for consideration for publication as an Original Article in *Journal of Oral Health and Dental Management.*

This study assessed the percentage of patients with hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection diagnosed by preoperative screening, and estimated the cost of screening. We also compared the prevalence of HBV and HCV infections by age, sex, and the eight commonest diagnoses in dental and oral-maxillofacial surgery. We retrospectively analyzed elective surgical cases in our oral-maxillofacial department between April 2012 and March 2015. We also compared the number of HBV+, HCV+, and HIV+ patients identified by preoperative screening to those identified through a preoperative interview and questionnaire.

Of 4469 patients, 34 (0.76%) and 90 (2.01%) patients were seropositive for hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) and HCV, respectively. Five (0.59%) of 845 patients exhibited HIV-1/2 antibody. The self-reported rates were as follows: HBV, 47.1% (16/34); HCV, 64.4% (58/90); and HIV, 60% (3/5). The odds ratio for HBsAg was not significant, irrespective of age. HCV antibody was more prevalent in patients with alveolar disorders and impacted teeth, after adjustment for age. Our annual cost for screening was ¥9,350,000 (USD$93,500 at an exchange rate of USD$1 = ¥100).

Given the high cost, low prevalence, and real likelihood of seroconversion after testing, screening for HBV, HCV, and HIV infections in patients requiring dental and oral-maxillofacial surgery is impractical. Universal precautions, with post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) as needed, remain the method of choice for minimizing risk to practitioners.

We believe that the findings of this study are relevant to the scope of your journal and will be of interest to your readership. This paper has not been published elsewhere and is not under consideration with another journal. The manuscript has been carefully reviewed by an experienced editor whose first language is English and who specializes in editing papers written by scientists who are not native speakers of English. All authors have approved the final submitted version of the manuscript. There are no conflicts of interest to declare.

Thank you again for your consideration of our paper.

Sincerely,

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