

Editor's choice

Our journal attempts to fill in a void in the specializes literature by tackling with two usually so far neglected segments: oral health and dental management and to bring up for debate a dental medicine issue common to the Black Sea countries. Even though various conflicting aspects can be debated upon, there are, indeed, common points as well:

1. All these are developing countries with low living standards.
2. All of them face significant oral health problems, which are not recognized as national priorities.
3. All experience difficulties of medical/dental services management, lacking mainly highly and medium trained managers.
4. All countries find it hard to acquire and carry on programs of preventing orodental diseases.
5. There are no modern efficient professional organizations of dental surgeons, technicians, nurses of students' prophylaxis, etc.
6. Most countries of this area are in transition from the Semashko to Bismark or other types of oral assistance.
7. Dental surgeons predominantly orient themselves toward therapy while prophylactic services are poorly developed.
8. Credible oral health surveys are inexistent which hampers designing oral health policy.
9. There are no known specialized journals, either at national or zonal levels to deal with the above-mentioned topics.
10. Under such conditions the dental surgeons in the Black Sea countries undergo moral and financial hardships.

This paper is not meant to lament the fate of dentistry but to bring forth issues for us together to seek solutions to. The concept that each one grapples with difficulties the best they can is counterproductive since it is only by professional solidarity that auspicious results can be reached.

Facts cannot be solved unless they are known. In this respect the first two moves made: (he organization of the International Congress "Oral Health in the Black Sea Countries" at

Constanta along with the issuing of our journal are meant to go public and make it known that these areas of dental medicine - oral health and dental management must turn into hot points of concern for the political bodies, which surely do not wish to turn the peoples which elected them into toothless human beings.

I disagree with the notion of "lost" individuals or generations in point of oral health but watching the goings on in this country at present, it becomes obvious that there will be much struggle and efforts till noticeable results can be visible.

The chapters of our journal are open and welcome anyone who cares to act in the following domanins:

- oral helth;
- dental management;
- preventive dentistry;
- community dentistry;
- pediatric dentistry;
- forensic orodental medicine;
- news from dental surgeons' associations.

The mere listing of such areas is evidence that not even the terminology is common to all and that there is considerable overlapping or that there are countries where certain areas are inexistent.

I think it is high time for the notion that all dental surgeons are knowledgeable in the mentioned areas to be discarded and supplanted by a new managerial concept.

Most inhabitants of the planet think they are quite good at soccer but genuine professionals are but few.

The advent of market economy in most of the Black Sea countries triggered beneficial alterations among dental surgeons. It turned them into basic managers (of first line, lower rank) but high or middle level managers are inexistent or if they do exist, they are not made use of. Under 5% of the management courses graduates are hired in managing positions in Romania. Dental management courses miss altogether.

Cooperation of Black Sea health professionals may result in digging up common strategies, as conditions are quite similar. Solidarity of professionals may persuade official bodies to act

toward improving oral health conditions. These official bodies are structured on five levels:

- state presidents;
- parliament groups;
- euroregions;
- twinned cities;
- the Black Sea Universities network.

To our regret we possess scant knowledge about the Black Sea city ports universities. It is obvious that each of them harbour opinions, as concern about future generations is common to all.

Our journal is conceived as a struggling factor aiming at contributing viewpoints, solutions and ways of applying them into practice. Consequently, we dare suggesting that our publication be encouraged and supported. We also propose that a second Congress on Oral

Health and Dental Management take place at Constanta on 5-7 June 2002. There is time enough for each representative to kindly get ready a report on the topics scrutinized above.

I am confident that there will very soon come up proposals of cooperation.

The expenses for two representatives of each country will be safely covered.

Our journal will be published quarterly and shipped to all dental faculties in the Black Sea countries. The next issue will come up in December 2002. It can also be ordered by any dental surgeon or interested people.

It would also be advisable to establish common centers of scientific research, exchange of ideas and personnel, along other feasible ways of cooperation.

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