Article type : Editorial

25th Anniversary of Oral Diseases

In early 1995 Crispian Scully telephoned Newell Johnson and said he wanted to start a completely new journal in our field motivated, perhaps, by not being able to place every piece of his extraordinary personal output of the art [yes art] and science of oral medicine and pathology. Newell was initially sceptical because it was, even then, a struggle for ordinary mortals to keep up with the literature. Crispian was always hard to say no to, indeed a couple of years earlier he had done the same thing on creation of Oral Oncology.

At that time Newell and Saman Warnakulasuriya had recently taken the Royal College of Surgeons of England Department of Dental Sciences to its new home within the King's College School of Medicine and Dentistry (KCSMD: part of the University of London) and we set about creating Oral Diseases: initially with McMillan Press as publisher. The inaugural issue was published in late 2005, the first Editorial signed by Newell, Crispian, John Greenspan (appointed to encourage submissions from the Americas), Masahiko Mori (to encourage submissions from the Asia-Pacific) and Saman. We all contributed to journal policy: the first editorial explained the wide range of oral/head and neck diseases in which we welcomed submissions and, most importantly, our emphasis on hypothesis-driven research. The journal was handled from the RCS Dept at KCSMD, largely by old-fashioned postal services, as email and related e-communications were in their infancy. We appointed a global editorial board to be both geographically representative, and in terms of discipline or skill base.

When Newell stepped down in 2004 to start the first new dental school in Australia/New Zealand for 60 years, at Griffith University, Bruce Baum who had replaced John Greenspan, representing the Americas, took over as senior Editor. Today's Editorial is able to be co-authored by all of us, as founding colleagues,

This article has been accepted for publication and undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process, which may lead to differences between this version and the [Version of Record](#). Please cite this article as [doi: 10.1111/ODI.13709](https://doi.org/10.1111/ODI.13709)

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved

with of course the exception of Crispian, to whose memory we pay tribute not just for this Journal, but for his immense contributions to science and to humanity through his work with Special Needs patients.

As the “old guard”, we now wish to look forward. The journal has moved through several editorial hands and publishers in the quarter century of its life and is now firmly established for quality and prestige. We congratulate the present Editor Giovanni Lodi and his large editorial team on current performance. As publisher, Wiley is guaranteeing quality and efficient procedures. Figure 1 shows the impressive growth in citations. Figure 2 the doubling, now stabilisation, of the journal’s impact factor (IF). These are impressive data. Whilst IFs are to some extent controversial (number of citations divided by the number of citable articles) they do give a measure of quality and an IF settling at over 2.5 is, we submit, an excellent outcome for a small global speciality like oral medicine. In fact, this IF is the highest of any journal with significant oral medicine content in the world.

Figure 3 shows how the journal has a truly global reach. Fig 4 shows how the content has, over the life of the journal, met the founders’ ambitions regarding content. In addition to attracting original research and solid clinical papers, we took early initiatives to produce special issues containing papers and abstracts from important international meetings/symposia, the first being the proceedings of the Second World Workshop on the Mouth and AIDS, held in London in 1997. This practice is now firmly a part of the Title, the 8th World Workshop on HIV/AIDS from the 2019 meeting in Indonesia having been published very recently (Vol 26, Issue S1, September 2020). The World Workshops in Oral Medicine (WWOM) have become very important to the clinical speciality of oral medicine and Oral Diseases is fundamental to their success, proceedings of the latest, the Seventh WWOM, appearing as a Supplement to Volume 25, June 2019. Indeed, alternating the publication of the proceedings of the WWOMs between Oral Diseases and a North American publisher has helped to draw the world of oral medicine together. The imminent publication of the Proceedings of the Workshop on Oral Potentially Malignant Disorders, led by Saman, and held under the auspices of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Oral Cancer at KCL, cements this tradition.

So, as the old guard, we congratulate those many colleagues who have developed and consolidated the journal, brought it to its present eminence and look forward to its future contributions to science and humanity.

Acknowledgement: We are grateful to Sharron Stapleton, Library and Researcher Services, Griffith University, for the illustrations.

Signed, October 2020:

Newell Johnson, Brisbane, Australia, n.johnson@griffith.edu.au

Saman Warnakulasuriya, London, UK s.warne@kcl.ac.uk

John Greenspan, San Francisco, USA, greenspanJ@ucsf.edu

Masahiko Mori, Kobe, Japan, mmori@song.ocn.ne.jp

Bruce Baum, Bethesda, USA, bjbaum@mac.com

Fig 1: Annual citations to papers published in Oral Diseases. Source Clarivate analytics

Fig. 2: Trends in Impact Factor for the journal this century

Fig. 3: Countries of origin of first author over the life of the journal. The links connect co-authors.

Van Eck, N.J. & Waltman, L. (2010). Software survey: VOSviewer, a computer program for bibliometric mapping. *Scientometrics*, 84(2), 523-538.

(Van Eck, N.J. & Waltman, L. (2010). Software survey: VOSviewer, a computer program for bibliometric mapping. *Scientometrics*, 84(2), 523-538.)