

## From the Editor

# editorial

## Patient-centered thinking



This issue of JIRD is focused on rehabilitation of the maxilla and begins with treatment guidelines formulated by Drs. Joseph Carpentieri and Carl Drago. A core concept underlying these guidelines is the need to first understand patients' chief complaints or concerns about their existing clinical situation, along with their treatment goals. Oftentimes, patients simply desire more retention for their removable prostheses. Alternatively, they may want to eliminate the removable aspect, instead obtaining a fixed solution for replacing their missing teeth.

Understanding the patient's preferences, finances, and clinical factors are all crucial to formulating a successful treatment plan. Clinical studies indicate that not only technical aspects determine patient satisfaction with given treatments; patient-related treatment outcomes may also be important determinants for success. These include perceptions of general comfort, aesthetics, masticatory function, and speech. Since the patient's assessment of a successful outcome may be the determining factor of overall success, treatment based on patient-centered thinking is the most likely to be judged successful.

Edentulism imposes functional and aesthetic burdens on individuals and worsens quality of life. Tooth loss also can compromise the psychosocial well-being of even patients who seem to adjust reasonably well to a conventional denture. Dierens et al<sup>1</sup> found that more than 90% of their study patients preferred a single-stage surgical approach to the classical protocol.

The clinical case presentations included in this issue demonstrate approaches to treatment of the maxillary arch following the Carpentieri/Drago guidelines. Clinicians contributing to this issue are from around the globe and share their experiences of using different treatment approaches and techniques to provide their patients with optimal outcomes. A variety of protocols and new technological advances are demonstrated, including guided surgery, fabrication of provisional prostheses placed in immediate loading protocols, and serial or staged approaches to treatment.

In our youth-centric society, the psychological advantages for patients who are treated with immediate or transitional protocols are numerous. As dental professionals, we should start by listening to our patients' concerns and educating them as to the possible options for treatment to address those concerns. From that point, an optimal treatment plan can be created. A patient's aspirations should be well understood and the treatment plan developed accordingly.

Sincerely,

Anita H. Daniels, RDH†  
Editor

1. Dierens M, Collaert B, Deschepper E, et al. Patient-centered outcome of immediately loaded implants in the rehabilitation of fully edentulous jaws. *Clin Oral Implants Res.* 2009;20(10):1070-1077.

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