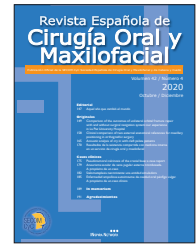




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## Editorial

# That year that changed the world

This fateful year 2020 comes to an end, in which the COVID-19 pandemic occupies all the front pages of newspapers and most of the news volume, publishing the fourth and last issue of the year, a very limited year in “usual” clinical activity of the majority of the national Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMS) departments, due to the limited resources that have been derived for the treatment of critical patients in intensive care and resuscitation units from our third level hospital centers. The occupation of beds for the treatment of patients with infection by the SARS-CoV-2 virus has also led to an occupation of a growing number of beds available for ordinary diseases, reaching saturation of the facilities capacities in the peaks of the two pandemic “waves” that we have suffered so far, more pronounced in the first one, which began in Spain on January 31, with the first case diagnosed on the island of La Gomera (Canary Islands). The reluctance in taking measures by the health authorities, if not the frank denial of a problem that was already global (confinement of Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the pandemic, with 11 million people on January 23; declaration of international emergency by the WHO on January 30; elevation of the health alert to “very serious threat” by the WHO, on February 11; death of the first victim in Spain, in Valencia, on February 13; elevation to “very high” international alert by WHO, on February 28; recommendation by the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control [ECDC] not to hold “massive acts”, on March 2; on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, the ECDC claims that “Member States should activate national alarm mechanisms and plans to ensure containment and mitigation with sanitary measures, especially the availability of equipment for healthcare workers and hospital beds”, also asking “to ensure that the population is aware that this COVID-19 outbreak may seriously affect society”; on March 7, Spain registered 430 diagnosed cases and 10 deaths; on March 8, Spain exceeds 600 cases and 17 deaths and the March 8 demonstration is being held without restrictions throughout the country, with an influx of about 120,000 people in Madrid and 50,000 in Barcelona) meant a huge waste of time and resources, if not a frank irresponsible promotion of its uncontrolled expansion, which has undoubtedly had a notable impact on the spectacular increase in the number of deceases and infected health workers in our country, especially because it sadly occupies the top positions in deaths and infected health workers per 100,000 inhabitants.

Throughout these months, our journal, adapting to such dire circumstances, has remained at the forefront of the generation and dissemination of new knowledge in relation to the treatment of patients infected by SARS-CoV-19 regarding maxillofacial and head and neck surgery. Already in issue 2 of this year, a consensus document prepared by the Spanish Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (SECOM) addressed the management of patients in OMS in the period of crisis and subsequent control of the COVID-19 outbreak with both versions in Spanish and English, this work being included among the pioneers published in our specialty worldwide. The special considerations in the management of the airway by means of tracheotomies in critical patients with SARS-CoV-19 was also addressed in an original article in this second issue of the *Rev Esp Cir Oral Maxilofac (RECOM)*, laying down the bases for the management of this type of patients, being also considered a reference among professionals in the specialties of OMS, Otorhinolaryngology (ENT), Anesthesiology and Intensive Medicine.

During the last two years, and especially in 2020, *RECOM* has received a significant number of original papers to be considered for publication, either structured original articles from clinical and research series or clinical cases of special clinical relevance. From January 2019 to October 2020, 70 original papers and 94 clinical cases were received, with 96 % unsolicited papers and acceptance rates of 52 % and 42 %, respectively. More specifically, in the last 12 months, due to the increasing amount of manu-

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scripts submitted to RECOM, the percentage of original articles and clinical cases finally accepted has fallen to 38 % and 33 %, respectively, indicating a significant increase in the quality standards required by the Editorial Committee for the publication of their works. We believe that the increase in the demand to publish at RECOM has had an impact, and must necessarily continue to do so, in increasing the quality of published works. This is also the result of the effort, never sufficiently valued, by the RECOM reviewer committee, composed of experts from our specialty who carry out a hidden work in an altruistic and exemplary way. Our sincere thanks go to them. The next few months will be crucial for RECOM to reach a new level of diffusion and prestige, consolidating itself as the reference publication in OMS within the Spanish-speaking world.

At the present time, despite the arrival of the first doses of the vaccine for COVID-19, and with the aggravation of presence of the first cases in Spain of a new strain, presumably more virulent from the United Kingdom, we face a worrying upturn in cases that presupposes the end of the second wave and the more than probable arrival of a third one around the family reunions on the occasion of the celebration of the Christmas holidays. It is imperative to influence individual protection measures and social distancing as the best measures to mitigate the expansion of contagions and allow the health system to absorb the growing demand for assistance from infected patients by SARS-CoV-2 that require hospitalization and critical care.

From RECOM we want to send a message of encouragement and hope to all our readers and their families, and we want to pay a heartfelt tribute to the thousands of victims in our country (48,926 in the “official” statistics, but almost 80,000 real deaths at December 18, 2020) and also in those of the countries of our brothers in Latin America. We say goodbye without nostalgia (with our eyes firmly on a future of hope) the one that we will always remember as... That year that changed the world.

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