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Welcome To Tomorrow

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Welcome To Tomorrow

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It is always a delight to see an idea become a reality. The idea for the journal *Dental Hypothesis* was the inspiration of my colleague Jafar Kolahi. He recognized that there was a need for a dental journal for those to publish a tentative explanation for a phenomenon, an explanation that could be used as a basis for further investigation. But between recognition of this need and the organization of a journal is a giant step, a step that many are either too fearful to initiate or once begun are unable to complete. Professor Kolahi not only took the step but he took the step and reached the other side. The birth of *Dental Hypothesis* is a result of his perseverance and refusal to quit. It has been my pleasure to work with him and watch as he overcame all the obstacles and hurdles placed in his path.

Early in the planning, it was necessary to address the question: Is there a need for a journal for dental hypothesis? A detailed

examination of dental journals now published revealed that most if not all published research findings – this research might be in various scientific disciplines or in education but all contained results of testing of a hypothesis. Some journals had sections for opinion but these too included the results of experiments. None allowed the publication of observations and an explanation of these observations – an hypothesis.

But generating a hypothesis is an integral part of the scientific method, a process that begins with observation, proceeds to formulation of an explanation (the hypothesis), followed by experiments to test the hypothesis. Most disciplines have journals that publish the articles that include all three components – observation, hypothesis, and experimental results. Some disciplines have journals that publish theories; there is no requirement for the author to generate experimental

results. For example, the Journal of Theoretical Biology publishes papers that explain biological processes. As might be expected of a theoretical study, the authors often use mathematical modeling as "proof". Physics is another discipline that encourages the development of theory. Since the late 19th century, physics has been divided into two disciplines: theoretical physics and experimental physics. It is only necessary to recall the papers of Albert Einstein in 1905 to appreciate the importance of theory to explain phenomena and to change our world.

Dentistry is a learned discipline that in its formative years was responsible for the repair, replacement and restoration of lost teeth, tooth structure and bone. More recently dentistry has expanded its scope of practice to include other craniofacial structures. The history of dentistry reveals milestones – the publication of theories that changed our thinking and how we practice. One milestone was the publication by W.D. Miller of the role of microbes in caries and periodontal disease. As a result of his work, dentists had a rationale for their diagnosis and treatment. Another milestone was the publication by W. Hunter of the Focal Theory of Infection. The publication of this work had a negative impact on the profession resulting in the extraction of teeth with pulpal

involvement. It was only through the efforts of the research work by endodontists that Hunter's theory was shown to be incorrect.

While these two examples illustrate that theories can have a both positive and negative effect on the progress of a profession, they also show how important theories are to generating further experimentation. This observation alone is sufficient justification for a journal for the publication of dental theories.

The publication of Dental Hypothesis fills this need. What will be published depends on you, what you are thinking about and what observations you think you can explain. This is a peer reviewed journal and the editors will do all they can to give each and every manuscript a fair reading. We look forward to reading and publishing your manuscript.

Conflicts of interests

The author declares that he has no competing interest. ER has editorial involvement with the Dental Hypotheses.

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