

Editorial

Commemorating IJOM's 50 Years of Publishing

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Fifty years of continuous publishing of a specialized scientific journal is deserving of celebration. To commemorate this auspicious milestone for the *International Journal of Orofacial Myology and Myofunctional Therapy* (IJOM), MDPI has encouraged and assisted me in several activities, all of which are archived under Special Issues (closed) on the journal's webpage. In addition to a historical timeline, testimonials from International Association of Orofacial Myology (IAOM) leaders, IJOM editorial board members (EBMs), and authors, as well as free access to an hour-long webinar featuring selected EBMs, the culminating feature of this celebration is a collection of articles published in this Special Issue.

This issue's theme is "50 Years of the IJOM: Perspectives and Future Directions in Orofacial Myology and Myofunctional Therapy." As Guest Editor for this issue, I invited and collated papers from researchers, clinicians, and thought leaders that reflect a variety of viewpoints. Articles highlight historical context, recent developments, and future directions in orofacial myology and myofunctional therapy. With the exception of editorials, all articles underwent the same rigorous peer review process as all articles published in the journal, resulting in high-quality publications that are as informative as they are stimulating.

This issue begins with a fitting tribute to the late Dr. Marvin Hanson by his colleague and friend, Dr. Robert "Bob" Mason. Dr. Hanson was one of the founders of the IAOM and was a frequent author in the IJOM, including its inaugural January 1975 issue. His contributions to the journal and the field have reverberated across the decades.

Three papers in this issue highlight the perspectives of clinical providers as well as patients. Sharon Smart and colleagues surveyed speech-language pathologists (SLPs), orofacial myofunctional therapists, dentists and orthodontists in Australia about their knowledge and approaches to managing atypical swallowing (tongue thrust). They also conducted in-depth interviews with a small cohort of SLPs. Elias Ghosein and colleagues surveyed pediatric dentists in Lebanon about myofunctional therapy and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). Both of these studies revealed the need for additional and expanded professional education internationally, and emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration. Diana Dobran Hansen and colleagues tracked adherence and interviewed adults with OSA to determine facilitators and barriers when carrying out orofacial myofunctional therapy. Patients' quotes are particularly poignant reminders of the need to consider individualized patient perspectives when assigning therapeutic exercises.

Three comprehensive and instructional papers critically examine and share clinical approaches to various orofacial myofunctional disorders. Pedro Contreras Salinas and colleagues reviewed the literature on myofunctional therapy in atypical swallowing. This review is a helpful resource for demonstrating that swallow function and tongue posture improve with orofacial myofunctional therapy in most studies, especially when combined with home practice and orthodontic treatment. They also reported that comparison across studies was difficult due to inconsistent and nonstandardized protocols. In what could be considered an unplanned response to the need for consistent protocols, Soroush Zaghi and colleagues shared their internally standardized protocols and clinical outcomes for the



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evaluation and treatment of lingual frenuloplasty. In addition to the impressive clinical outcomes data reported for 379 pediatric and adult patients, practitioners will appreciate the clinical protocols provided as supplementary materials with this article. Rosalba Courtney published her clinical perspectives on Integrative Breathing Therapy, which considers the upper and lower airways as an integrated system according to a multidimensional framework. This highly educational and well-organized article is a must-read for orofacial myofunctional therapists delving into the topic of behavioral treatments for OSA.

Two final papers in this special collection focused on historically contextualizing and advancing orofacial myology—they are destined to become classic articles and should be required reading for all current and future orofacial myologists. Soroush Zaghi and colleagues wrote an enlightening and thoughtful article following the history of orofacial myofunctional therapy, from ancient through current practices, and proposes new avenues for advancing orofacial myofunctional therapy. The authors identify key inflection points that have altered the course of this therapeutic approach, from targeted exercises to broader functional frameworks. They describe efforts to standardize terminology, clarify the scope of practice, and advance professional standards by proposing tiered models of care. Lucas Ferreira led an international group of experts to co-author a stimulating and provocative non-institutional position paper that challenges traditional representations of orofacial myology (e.g., orofacial myofunctional disorders and orofacial myofunctional therapy) to be recognized and standardized internationally as a field of practice called orofacial motricity. The authors recognize and describe the diversity of international approaches to the development of these terms and concepts, often paralleled by professional associations, scholarly literature, and educational programs. These two papers together offer fertile ground for considering productive approaches for the future of research and clinical practice related to orofacial myofunctional disorders.

Overall, this issue provides rich reading material for anyone striving to grasp the breadth and depth of the study and management of orofacial myofunctional disorders, as well as those already deeply immersed in orofacial myology looking for inspiration from the past and aspirations for the future. I invite you to peruse this Special Issue, lingering on content that compels you to pause and reconsider your own perspectives while contemplating future directions.

Here's to another 50 years!

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