

# Advocacy for a digital oral health that leaves no one behind

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The health, social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have already had a dramatic impact on the prevailing oral health care model and will continue to do so. The paper "Advocacy for a

Digital Oral Health That Leaves No One Behind," published in the *JDR Clinical & Translational Research (JDR CTR)*, promotes the use of digital tools to offer opportunities to improve healthy behavior, lower risk factors common to oral diseases and other noncommunicable diseases and contribute to reducing oral health inequalities.

To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, systems were quickly put in place in most countries to respond to dental emergencies, giving priority to distance screening, advice to patients by remote means and treatment of urgent cases while ensuring continuous care. Digital health was widely adopted as a central component of this new approach, leading to new practices and tools that, in turn, demonstrated their potential, limitations and possible excesses.

Authors Nicolas Giraudeau, University of Montpellier, France, and Benoit Varenne, World Health Organization (WHO), Oral Health Programme, Geneva, Switzerland, believe that [digital tools](#) can accelerate the implementation of universal health coverage and help achieve the World Health Organization 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, leaving no one behind. The WHO mOralHealth program is structured in four modules (literacy, training, early detection, and surveillance). "Digital oral health should be one of the pillars of oral healthcare post-COVID-19. Universal access to digital oral health should be promoted globally. The WHO's Oral Health Programme aims to do that."

"The use of [digital health](#) has led to a new way of understanding both general and oral health," said JDR CTR Editor-in-Chief Jocelyne S. Feine, McGill University, Montréal, Quebec, Canada. "This paper calls for [political leaders](#) to be made aware of the universal availability of digital technology and make use of it as a safe and equitable means of delivering oral health care to the public."

**More information:** N. Giraudeau et al, Advocacy for a Digital Oral Health That Leaves No One Behind, *JDR Clinical & Translational Research* (2021). [DOI: 10.1177/23800844211026610](https://doi.org/10.1177/23800844211026610)

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