

Role of Whatsapp in Oral Cancer - The Road Ahead....

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Abstract

The discovery of smart phones and instant messaging apps has been a milestone in the field of technology. However, it is up to us how wisely we can use these technologies in healthcare sector, by bridging the gap between them. The studies in the literature have proved that the field of dentistry is not an exception this. They have highlighted the importance of instant messaging Apps like WhatsApp in diagnosis of oral diseases. A second opinion about the diagnosis of the oral diseases can be drawn with the help of WhatsApp. It can be used as a tool in the detection and evaluation of potentially malignant disease before the lesion becomes more dreadful oral cancer.

Keywords: Oral cancer; WhatsApp; Smartphones

Introduction

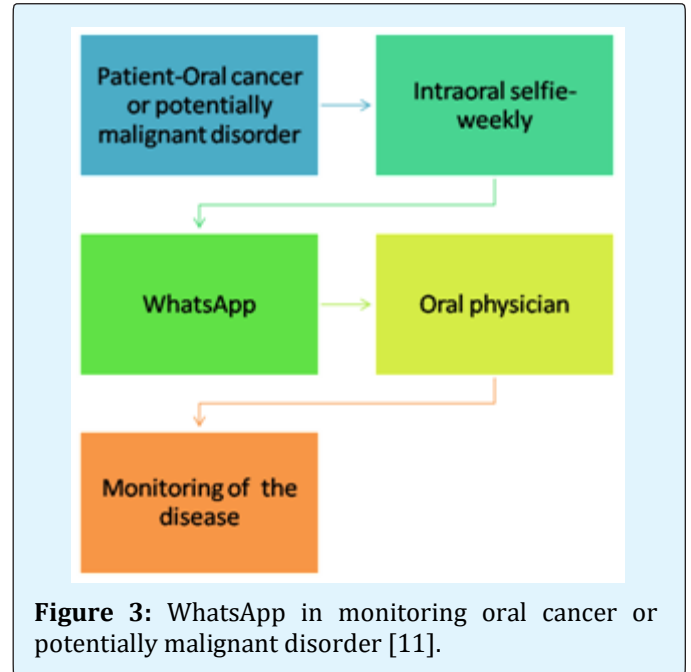
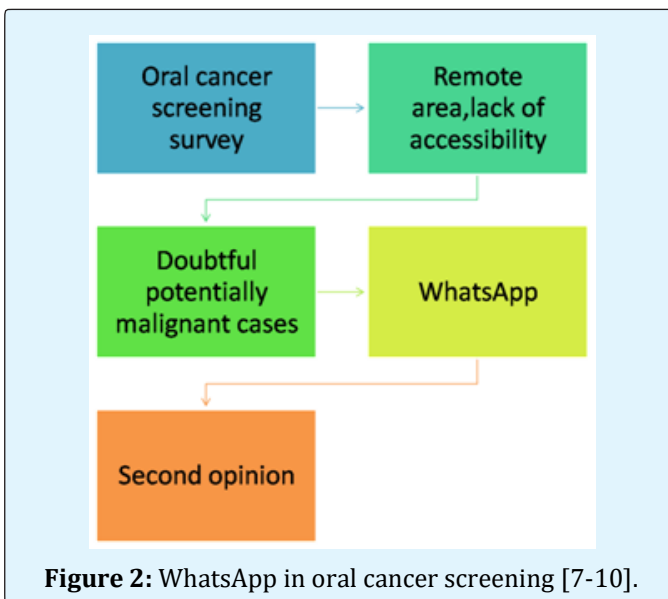
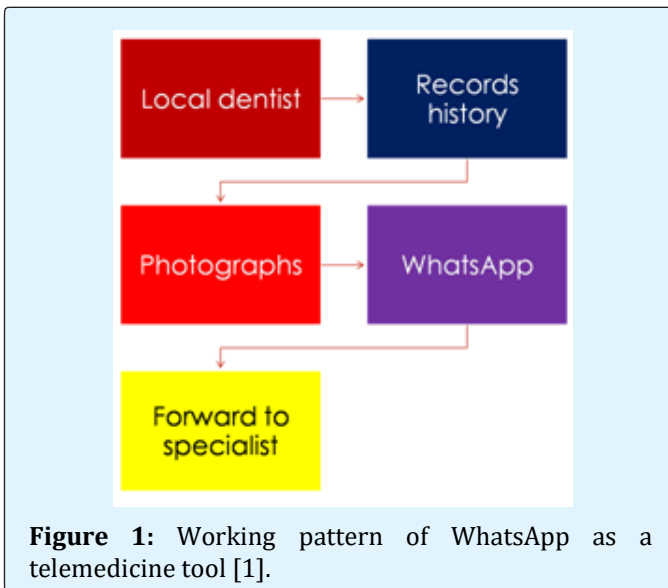
The main breakthrough in the field of technology of current decade is the instant messaging apps like Whatsapp which are accessible through smartphones. Several studies proved the importance these apps in dentistry. Sophisticated and high-quality cameras available on the smartphones further enhance their use in capturing high-quality images of clinical pictures, x-ray images, histopathological images and laboratory investigation images. A second opinion about diagnosis and treatment plan can be easily obtained by sending patients data through the WhatsApp messenger. Further, the options like group chat and broadcast, further

advantageous, by creating room for healthy discussion on interesting cases. A study conducted by Petruzzi & De Benedittis [1] proved the efficacy of WhatsApp in obtaining oral medicine consultation from remote areas.

Whatsapp and Oral Cancer

Now it is the time to bridge this technology and dentistry so that it will be beneficial to all. The main focus of exploitation in dentistry would be oral cancer [2]. Despite the several studies in the field of oral cancer, success is not been obtained to enhance therapeutic outcome [3-5]. The battle against this devastating disease will be won only by early detection and prevention [6].

Now, this is where WhatsApp comes into the picture. WhatsApp will be useful while conducting oral cancer screening surveys in which a second opinion can be obtained in doubtful cases of oral cancer which will aid in early diagnosis. The speciality of oral cancer lies in the fact that it will go through the stage of the potentially malignant disorder before becoming a dreadful disease. The patients with such conditions can be connected with the oral physician through WhatsApp. The physician can detect any alteration in the lesion without any delay [7-10]. Patients can also take intraoral selfies and take opinion from the oral physician about the prognosis of the lesion (Figures 1-3).



Conclusion

All the dental colleges, government and non-government dental hospitals should make an arrangement so that patient can contact them through WhatsApp and can forward their intraoral images for accurate diagnosis [11]. Hopefully, if these steps are taken in future, there is a possibility to reduce the oral cancer burden. Further, community-based trials are necessary to prove the role of WhatsApp in early diagnosis oral cancer.

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