

Research Aid Award

Dr. Ronald J. Lowe III, *University at Buffalo*

Dr. Ronald Lowe is a second-year orthodontic resident at the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine. Born and raised in Orange County, New York, he continued his education at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York. At Le Moyne, Ronald majored in Biology and minored in Business Administration, Chemistry and Philosophy. After graduating from Le Moyne College, he went on to obtain his dental degree from the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine. Dr. Lowe was fortunate to immediately begin his orthodontic journey at the University at Buffalo. Since beginning his Advanced Education in Orthodontics, Dr. Lowe has developed great interest in the use and application of telemedicine in the orthodontic office. More specifically, Dr. Lowe is interested in the knowledge, perception, and utilization of teleorthodontics in the U.S. and internationally as well as the future applications of teleorthodontics in the private practice sector.



In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many dental and orthodontic offices incorporated teledentistry into their practice. Teleorthodontics, a subset of teledentistry, aims to deliver health-related information and orthodontic care remotely using information technology and telecommunication. Teleorthodontics encompasses the diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and prevention of problems associated with orthodontic care. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, studies have shown teleorthodontics being used for monitoring patients with fixed orthodontic appliances, monitoring patients with clear aligner therapy and for the management of orthodontic-related emergencies. In response to the inability to schedule in-person appointments, many orthodontic offices began offering virtual consultation appointments promising an individualized treatment plan based on records provided from the patient. This study aims to assess the current overall perception of teleorthodontics from a global view and determine the reliability of virtually obtained records for orthodontic decision making.

The generous funding made available by the AAOF will offer our profession insight into the knowledge, perception and utilization of teleorthodontics from a worldwide vantage point. To our knowledge, this will be the first research project to investigate the overall perception of teleorthodontics on a global scale. Through our work, we hope this project will offer orthodontists the information needed to guide their clinical decision making.