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DENTAL LITIGATION CLAIMS OF THE LARGEST PUBLIC DENTAL SERVICE IN ITALY OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS

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Background: *The analysis of dental litigation provide several information about dental service, dental disciplines at higher risk of claim, dentist -patient relationship, etc. Anecdotically, dental litigation is deemed progressively increasing, but recent data do not support such a common opinion. Analysis of dental claims help hospitals and dental health professionals to improve the assistance, general organization of the service, procedure of management and government.*

The aim of this study is to examine litigation in dentistry of the biggest public service in Italy, over a period of five years (from 2008 to 2012).

Materials and methods: *The paper is based on the medico-legal analysis of 239 reports of dental litigation. Reports, written by a dentist expert in legal medicine, are examined according to predetermined criteria: 1) gender and age of dentist and of patient 2) involved discipline 3) latency period between treatment and claim filing 4) complained damage 5) average costs of compensation 6) unsettled claims and court prosecution.*

Results: *will be discussed and compared with those published nationally and internationally.*

Comparing findings with data published by Manca (2011) and Pinchi et Al (2013), the differences of dental litigation arising from National Health Services and private practice can be discussed.

Conclusion: *Our data of dental claims are consistent with those reported by different authors for dental discipline prevalence. Out-of-court settlement shows high rate of success in solving dental dispute when a dentist expert in legal- medicine and in conciliation procedure is involved.*

KEYWORDS: Forensic Odontology, Dental Litigation, Italy