

REPORT OF THE WORKGROUP ON ADA/CODA RELATIONSHIP

ADA Strategic Forecast Outcome: Public Profession: Support a healthy, well-distributed, skilled and scoped workforce.

Background: At the June 2014 American Dental Association (ADA) Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Chair and CODA Director provided an annual update on CODA activities, issues, and concerns. This discussion resulted in the formation of an ADA/CODA Relationship Workgroup to further consider the relationship of CODA to the ADA, including financial and governance matters. The Workgroup has met annually since 2014. The Workgroup was established to maintain an open line of communication between the American Dental Association and Commission on Dental Accreditation and, in doing so, to improve the relationship regarding financial support and governance, and educate each organization in the process.

Members of the 2024-2025 Workgroup: Dr. Ngoc Chu (CODA), Dr. Edwin del Valle-Sepulveda (First Vice President), Dr. Brendan Dowd (2nd District Trustee), Dr. John Hisel, Jr. (11th District Trustee, co-chair), Dr. Jeffrey Kahl (14th District Trustee), Dr. Johnathan Knapp (1st District Trustee), Dr. George Kushner (CODA), Dr. Cataldo Leone (CODA), Dr. Frank Licari (CODA, co-chair), and Dr. Deborah Weisfuse (CODA). The Workgroup met on June 4, 2025, via a virtual meeting; all members were present except Dr. Weisfuse, and Dr. del Valle-Sepulveda attended a portion of the meeting. Staff support for the workgroup: Dr. Elizabeth "Betsy" Shapiro (interim ADA Executive Director), Mr. Naveed Mughal (Education), Ms. Samara Schwartz (Legal), Ms. Peggy Soeldner (CODA), Dr. Sherin Took (CODA), Dr. Anthony Ziebert (Education).

Key Issues: The Workgroup focused on four (4) key issues during its discussion, including: 1) the ADA-CODA Shared Services Agreement, 2) the CODA Administrative Fund, 3) CODA's ongoing technology needs, and 4) the 2024 ADA study of CODA. The Workgroup also discussed dental education and the workforce.

Update from the Commission on Dental Accreditation: The Commission provided a verbal report to the Workgroup, noting the Commission's accreditation of 9 new programs in Summer 2024 along with taking 406 accreditation actions, and accreditation of 17 new programs in Winter 2025 among the 410 accreditation actions taken by the Commission. The newly accredited programs included but were not limited to nine (9) dental hygiene programs, four (4) dental assisting programs, three (3) dental education programs, and 10 advanced dental education programs. The Commission also directed the establishment of a process of accreditation for advanced dental education programs in operative dentistry, cariology and biomaterials, and for clinical fellowship training programs in oral and maxillofacial surgery - trigeminal nerve surgery and disorders, noting that Accreditation Standards are under development for these two (2) disciplines. The Commission members also informed the Workgroup of the Commission's conclusions related to the Ad Hoc Committee on Dental Assisting Program Closures and Discontinuance of Accreditation, noting that study results and further information would be circulated to various communities of interest including the ADA.

Update from American Dental Association: The American Dental Association provided an update on the state of the ADA, noting the Association is operationally and financially strong, and committed to transparency and trust among all members. The ADA members of the Workgroup also noted the ADA's move to a new office location, the investments in an association management system, progress on a member credit union, and Forsyth's ongoing commitment to science.

Shared Services Agreement and CODA Administrative Fund: The Workgroup reviewed and discussed the Shared Services Agreement, which expired December 31, 2024. It was noted that the Commission collects fees from educational programs that it accredits or programs that are applying for accreditation. The Commission has maintained a fiscally responsible revenue and expense model such that CODA has supported its own operating budget since 2015 inclusive of direct and indirect expenses. The Workgroup discussed the proposed revisions to the Shared Services Agreement (**Appendix 1**) and

CODA's request that the annual excess of total operating expenses (direct and indirect) be applied to the Commission's annual budget of the subsequent year or the Commission's Administrative Fund at the discretion of the Commission.

The members of the Commission noted that CODA requires an operational budget and administrative fund, which will allow CODA to function at its fullest potential. Further, programs pay accreditation fees to CODA with the intent that the funds remain within CODA to support and enhance operations. The members of the Commission believed that programs would be concerned to learn that the Commission does not retain its revenue after annual operating direct and indirect expenses are paid. It was also noted that the recent ADA study of CODA suggests a need for enhancements in technology, human resources, additional meetings, and other areas to further support CODA's work, all of which will require significant ongoing funding. For example, CODA members noted that in late 2024 CODA learned the ADA had created a new staff position in CODA (i.e., CODA Vice President), to be supported through CODA's operating expenses, which resulted in a Winter 2025 CODA directive to increase annual accreditation fees by 20% in 2026 to support this role and ensure that CODA continues to cover all direct and indirect expenses. The CODA members noted that additional suggestions in the ADA Study of CODA will result in a significant increase in expenses. Additionally, the Commission members noted CODA's ongoing need for an accreditation software tool and learning management system. The CODA members informed the Workgroup members that a recent financial analysis of CODA by an external expert concluded that CODA should have one (1) year of operating expenses in a reserve/administrative fund. The members of CODA believed that CODA could manage its additional expenses through its operating budget, retaining year-end revenue for use by CODA in subsequent years, and through an elimination of the Administrative Fund cap.

Regarding the CODA Administrative Fund, it was again noted that the fund was uncapped from 2014 to 2020. However, in April 2020, the Board of Trustees adopted Resolution B-56-2020 and restored a cap of \$300,000 on the CODA Administration Fund. The Board noted that any CODA funding needs above the \$300,000 cap could be requested by CODA in an expedited fashion to the Board of Trustees from the ADA's own reserve or contingent funds. Again, the CODA members of the Workgroup believed that CODA should have an uncapped fund.

The Workgroup discussed additional aspects of the Shared Services Agreement which were proposed by CODA for revision, including a potential move from a three (3) year to five (5) year agreement. Members of the Workgroup requested information on the length of other ADA agreements, with a concern that five (5) years may be too long. Following discussion, the Workgroup concluded that more information will be obtained on contract lengths, and that each party to the agreement should review the proposed revisions and reconvene the Workgroup at a future meeting to further negotiate and finalize the Shared Services Agreement.

CODA's Ongoing Technology Needs (Electronic Accreditation System): An update was provided to the Workgroup on CODA's ongoing need for an electronic accreditation tool to conduct its accreditation operations. The Workgroup learned that CODA staff has conducted ongoing meetings with the software vendor and is making progress on the electronic accreditation tool, however, more work is needed. The Commission members also informed the Workgroup of CODA's need for a learning management system (LMS) to enhance training to programs and site visitors. Additionally, there may be a future need for an internal (closed system) Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool to support accreditation activities. Again, the CODA members of the Workgroup noted the financial resources for these tools may be supported by CODA if the Commission had the ability to retain its year-end revenue and maintain adequate funds in its Administrative Fund.

2024 ADA Report on CODA: The members of the Workgroup were informed that the Commission directed an Ad Hoc Committee to study the 2024 ADA study of CODA. The CODA Ad Hoc Committee considered the 11 recommendations in the study and will submit a report with recommendations to the

Commission. It was noted that the CODA Ad Hoc Committee's report and CODA actions will be provided to the ADA Leadership once the Commission approves the report, likely following its Summer 2025 meeting.

Other Topics of Interest: The members of the Workgroup noted the 2024 House of Delegates action on workforce matters and subsequent letter from the ADA's Council on Dental Education and Licensure (ADA-CDEL) to CODA. It was noted that the letter was received and would be considered by the Commission at its Summer 2025 meetings. Further, the Workgroup was reminded that CODA had previously reviewed this topic several times over the past few years. Additionally, as noted in CODA's initial statements, there had been a significant expansion of dental hygiene programs gaining accreditation and existing programs increasing enrollment. The Commission also recently revised the Dental Hygiene Standards related to faculty qualifications for clinical instructors. The CODA members of the Workgroup noted that all of its efforts has resulted in an increase in dental hygiene students nationally.

Resolution

B-#. Resolved, that the Board of Trustees consider the proposed revisions to the Intercompany Memorandum of Understanding and Services Agreement (Appendix 1) and reconvene the ADA-CODA Relationship Workgroup at a future meeting to further negotiate and finalize the Agreement.

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