

REPORT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON DENTAL ASSISTING EDUCATION TO THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION

Committee Chair: Ms. Martha McCaslin. Committee Members: Ms. Julie Bera, Ms. Kimberly Bland, Dr. Martin Bloom, Dr. Jennifer Boyce, Ms. Heather Ferris, Dr. Preeti Sahasi, Ms. Staci Schory, Ms. Heather Seghi, and Ms. Diana Williams. Commissioner Trainee: Ms. Jill Day observed the meeting as a Commissioner trainee. Guests (Open Session Only, Virtual): Ms. Laura Skarnulis, chief executive officer, Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) and the DALE Foundation, and Ms. Rebecca Stolberg, vice president, Allied Dental Education and Faculty Development, American Dental Education Association (ADEA), attended the policy portion of the meeting. Commissioner: Dr. Maxine Feinberg, chair, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), *ex officio*, attended a portion of the meeting virtually. Commission Staff: Ms. Jamie Asher Hernandez, manager, Allied Dental Education, Ms. Katie Navickas, manager, Allied Dental Education, Mr. Daniel Sloyan, coordinator, Allied Program Reviews, Ms. Zaira Limon Perez, senior project assistant, Allied Dental Education, CODA. Dr. Sherin Tooks, senior director, CODA, attended a portion of the meeting. Ms. Samara Schwartz, senior associate general counsel, CODA, attended a portion of the meeting virtually. The meeting of the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) was held on July 11-12, 2024 at the American Dental Association Headquarters, Chicago, Illinois. The Review Committee also met on July 23, 2024 via a virtual meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO DENTAL ASSISTING EDUCATION

Informational Report on Frequency of Citings of Accreditation Standards for Dental

Assisting Education Programs (p. 300): The Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) considered the annual report of the frequency of citings of Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs and noted the most frequently cited areas of non-compliance for site visits conducted between July 1, 2020 through October 31, 2023.

The data indicates that a total of 466 citings of non-compliance were made. Of these, 51 (10.94%) were related to Standard 1–Institutional Effectiveness; 310 (66.52%) were related to Standard 2–Educational Program; 46 (9.87%) were related to Standard 3–Administration, Faculty and Staff; 37 (7.94%) were related to Standard 4–Educational Support Services; 21 (4.51%) were related to Standard 5–Health and Safety Provisions; and 1 (0.22%) was related to Standard 6–Patient Care Services.

Analysis of the data indicates the most frequently cited areas of non-compliance are within Standard 2-Educational Program. Standard 2-9 had 50 citings total, with subset Standard 2-9o related to identifying and responding to medical and dental emergencies receiving 12 citations. Standard 2-6 received 39 total citings. Standard 2-6b and Standard 2-6c, requiring that programs have a formal, written curriculum management plan, which includes evaluation of the effectiveness of all courses as they support the program’s goals and competencies (2-6b) and a defined mechanism for coordinating instruction among dental assisting program faculty (2-6c), were both cited 14 times. Standard 2-7 related to written documentation of the curriculum was

cited 32 times, with most citations (12 citations) in 2-7e related to specific criteria for final grade calculation. Finally, Standard 1-1 related to the program's outcomes assessment was cited 31 times, total, with a majority of citations (13 citations) in 1-1e related to the program's use of findings and conclusions for program improvements.

Recommendation: This report is informational in nature and no action is required.

Report on the 2024 Validity and Reliability Study of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (p. 301): The Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (**Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 301**) were adopted by the Commission on Dental Accreditation at its August 2, 2019 meeting for implementation July 1, 2020. According to the Commission's Policy on Assessing the Validity and Reliability of the Accreditation Standards, "the validity and reliability of accreditation standards will be assessed after they have been in effect for a period of time equal to the minimum academic length of the accredited program plus three years." Thus, the validity and reliability of the standards for a one-year program will be assessed after four (4) years. In accordance with this policy, the Validity and Reliability Study for Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs was initiated in Spring 2024 with the results to be reviewed at the Summer 2024 meeting of the Commission.

A total of 3,002 individuals were invited by email to complete the online survey on May 21, 2024. In order to increase the response rate, follow-up mailings were administered to all non-respondents on May 29, 2024 and June 4, 2024. Data collection ended on June 9, 2024, yielding 403 responses, for an overall adjusted response rate of 13.7% (excluding 66 individuals whose email addresses were undeliverable).

In addition, at its Winter 2024 meeting, the Commission considered the Report of the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) related to Standard 2-1 (Admissions), dental assisting program closures and discontinuance of accreditation, and faculty to student ratios (**Appendix 2, Policy Report p. 301**). Following review of the DA RC report, the Commission concurred with all recommendations of the DA RC and directed consideration of these matters (i.e., Standard 2-1, program closures, and faculty to student ratios) in conjunction with the Validity and Reliability Study for the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs. Related specifically to program closures and discontinuance of accreditation, the Commission further directed:

- That the Commission gather data from CODA-accredited dental assisting education programs, the American Dental Association (ADA), American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA), Dental Assisting National Board (DANB), state dental boards, and state dental associations related to program closures and discontinuance of accreditation.
- The development of educational materials for the public and academic institutions to emphasize the value of CODA-accredited dental assisting education programs.
- A formal communication to the American Dental Association's Council on Dental Education and Licensure (ADA-CDEL) to urge CDEL and the ADA to support and

encourage students to attend CODA-accredited dental assisting education programs as a pathway to the profession.

May 1, 2024 Meeting of the DA RC: The Dental Assisting Review Committee met on May 1, 2024 to initiate a review of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, while awaiting the results of the Validity and Reliability Study. The Committee reviewed its charge and resource materials, noting that the results of the Validity and Reliability Study will be available for review at the Summer 2024 meeting. The Committee also reviewed the Commission's communication to the American Dental Association's Council on Dental Education and Licensure, urging CDEL and the ADA to support and encourage students to attend CODA-accredited dental assisting education programs as a pathway to the profession (**Appendix 3, Policy Report p. 301**).

The Committee also reviewed and provided feedback to CODA staff on the draft survey related to program closures and discontinuance of accreditation. Additionally, the Committee began a review of the Accreditation Standards, noting that continued discussion on Standards 2-1, 2-3, and 3-2g should occur following data collection through the Validity Study. The Committee discussed the concept of dual enrollment of students in high school and CODA-accredited dental assisting programs as a topic of further discussion. However, it was also noted that restrictions such as age requirements to take radiographs or perform certain functions may affect a student's ability to matriculate through a dental assisting program while in high school. The Committee determined further discussion was warranted at its next meeting.

The Committee also noted that Standards related to dental radiology, preclinical skills, clinical externship experiences, faculty to student ratios, faculty requirements, the learning environment, and health and safety, are among the Standards that should be reviewed at its next meeting. The Committee noted that its work would continue through a comprehensive review of Standards following the Validity and Reliability Study.

Summer 2024 DA RC Meeting: At its Summer 2024 meeting, the Dental Assisting Review Committee discussed the initial findings of the May 1, 2024 meeting of the Review Committee related to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs that may require further review and possible revision. The Committee also discussed CODA's directive of Winter 2024 related to dental assisting program closures, the letter to CDEL from the Commission, and the survey data and written comments gathered through the Validity and Reliability Study for Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (**Appendix 4, Policy Report p. 301**). The Committee noted a 13.7% response rate to the Validity and Reliability Study survey.

Following discussion, the DA RC determined that an Ad Hoc Committee of available members of the Dental Assisting Review Committee should further study the Validity and Reliability Study data to determine whether proposed revisions to Accreditation Standards are warranted. It was agreed that this Ad Hoc Committee should include the outgoing Chair of the Dental

Assisting Review Committee as an ex-officio member for continuity of the Committee's work. The DA RC also discussed several additional Dental Assisting Standards that should be considered along with those already identified during the May 1, 2024 meeting, when the DA RC Ad Hoc Committee conducts its comprehensive review of the Accreditation Standards. The DA RC noted that the work could be completed virtually, therefore there would be no cost impact to the Commission. A report would be submitted to the Dental Assisting Review Committee and Commission following completion of the comprehensive review of the Standards.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee of available members of the Dental Assisting Review Committee, including the outgoing Chair of the Review Committee as an ex-officio member for continuity, to further study the data collected through the Validity and Reliability Study, and consider potential revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, with a future report to the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration of Proposed Revision to Standard 4-8g of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs: The Dental Assisting Review Committee (DA RC) discussed Dental Assisting Standard 4-8g as it was noted that state regulations have changed in many states leading to the removal of lead aprons and cervical collars as a requirement during dental radiology procedures. It was noted that some CODA-accredited dental assisting programs no longer have access to lead aprons and cervical collars and could be cited as noncompliant for Standard 4-8g. In addition, it was also noted that some states continue to require lead aprons and cervical collars so removing "lead aprons and cervical collars for each unit" from Standard 4-8 should not be done due to state-specific regulations. After discussion about revisions and deletions to Standard 4-8g, it was determined that "(according to state regulations)" should be added to Standard 4-8g, for clarity, as noted below. Due to the clarifying nature of the change, the DA RC believed this change did not warrant public comment and could be adopted with immediate implementation.

(Underline indicates Addition)

- 4-8 Each radiography area must provide equipment for faculty supervision and effective instruction to accommodate several students simultaneously that include:**
- a. Dental radiography units which meet applicable regulations**
 - b. Radiographic teaching manikins**
 - c. Radiographic view boxes and/or monitors**
 - d. Processing units with darkroom capacity or digital equipment**
 - e. Multiple sets of image receptor holding devices**

- f. **Radiation-monitoring devices are provided for students and faculty**
(according to state regulations)
- g. **Lead aprons and cervical collars for each unit** (according to state regulations)
- h. **Counter with sink**
- i. **Dental chair or unit**

Intent:

The radiography facilities should allow the attainment of program goals and objectives. Radiography facilities and equipment should effectively accommodate the clinic and/or laboratory schedules, the number of students, faculty and staff, and comply with applicable regulations to ensure effective instruction in a safe environment.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt and direct immediate implementation of the proposed revision, noted above, to Standard 4-8g of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs and all related documents.

**CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATING TO MORE THAN
ONE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Matters related to more than one review committee are included in a separate report.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO ACCREDITATION STATUS

Matters related to accreditation status of programs are included in a separate report.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Martha McCaslin
Chair, Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education