

## **REPORT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON DENTAL HYGIENE EDUCATION TO THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION**

Committee Chair: Dr. Susan Kass. Committee Members: Ms. Denise Avrutik, Dr. Linda Boyd, Dr. Marcia Ditmyer, Ms. Patricia Guenther, Ms. Carrie Hobbs, Dr. Lorie Holt, Dr. Tariq Javed (attended a portion of the meeting), Dr. Barbara Krieg-Menning, Dr. Nancy Rosenthal, Ms. Laura Scully, Dr. Paul Francis Tayag Ayson, and Ms. Maiga Van Haalen. Guests (Open Session Only): Dr. JoAnn Gurenlian, director, Education and Research, American Dental Hygienists' Association, and Ms. Rebecca Stolberg, vice president, Allied Dental Education and Faculty Development, American Dental Education Association, attended the policy portion of the meeting. Staff Members: Dr. Sherin Tooks, director, Ms. Katie Navickas, manager, Allied Dental Education, and Mr. Daniel Sloyan, senior project assistant, Allied Dental Education, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). Ms. Cathryn Albrecht, senior associate general counsel, CODA, attended a portion of the meeting. The meeting of the Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education (DH RC) was held on January 10-11, 2023 via a virtual meeting.

### **CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO DENTAL HYGIENE EDUCATION**

**Consideration of Proposed Revision to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs (p. 400)**: At its Winter 2022 meeting, the Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education (DH RC) and Commission on Dental Accreditation reviewed the November 12, 2021 letter from Ms. Margaret Lemaster, dental hygiene program director, requesting that the Commission consider proposed revisions to Standard 2-14 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs. The proposed revision to Dental Hygiene Standard 2-14 suggested the Commission modify the Standard to require that graduates “be competent in providing dental hygiene care for all stages and grades of periodontal disease.” The Review Committee noted that revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs were approved by the Commission on February 12, 2021 for implementation July 1, 2022.

Although, in Winter 2022, the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs adopted by the Commission on February 12, 2021 for implementation July 1, 2022 were not yet implemented, the DH RC believed that proposed revision to Standard 2-14 was warranted, with circulation for a period of six (6) months, with comments reviewed at the Commission’s Summer 2022 meetings. At its Winter 2022 meeting, the Commission considered the Report of the Dental Hygiene Review Committee and proposed revisions to Dental Hygiene Standard 2-14, noting the Dental Hygiene Commissioner identified a concern related to the proposed revision to another Standard (Standard 3-6) and requested that all proposed revisions be returned to the Dental Hygiene Review Committee for further consideration at the Summer 2022 meeting. The Commission concurred and directed Standard 2-14 be returned to the DH RC for further consideration.

At its August 2022 meeting, the DH RC again considered the proposed revision to Dental Hygiene Standard 2-14. The DH RC reviewed its Winter 2022 proposed revisions and engaged in a lengthy discussion related to the new terminology to classify periodontal disease. Following

discussion, the DH RC recommended the proposed revision to Standard 2-14 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs (**Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 400**) be circulated to the communities of interest for six (6) months, for review and comment, with a Hearing conducted in conjunction with the October 2022 American Dental Association meeting, with comments reviewed at the Commission's Winter 2023 meetings. At its Summer 2022 meeting, the Commission concurred with the DH RC recommendation and directed circulation of the proposed revision to Dental Hygiene Standard 2-14 for a period of six (6) months.

As directed by the Commission, the proposed revision to Standard 2-14 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs (**Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 400**) was circulated for comment through December 1, 2022. Eight (8) comments were received at the Fall 2022 Virtual Hearing on Standards (**Appendix 2, Policy Report p. 400**). Additionally, the Commission office received 26 written comments prior to the December 1, 2022 deadline (**Appendix 3, Policy Report p. 400**).

At its Winter 2023 meeting, the DH RC considered comments received on the proposed revision to Dental Hygiene Standard 2-14. The Committee noted numerous comments expressing concern regarding the availability of patients with Stage IV periodontal disease and the ability of dental hygiene students to provide dental hygiene care to these individuals. The Committee discussed the difficulty that some programs may encounter in locating sufficient patients with Stage IV periodontal disease to ensure that all students have adequate opportunities to develop competence in this area. Additionally, the DH RC believed that patients who exhibit Stage IV periodontal disease may be beyond the skill level and scope of care for a dental hygiene student. The Committee noted that Stage IV patients are typically referred to specialists due to their complexity. Finally, the DH RC noted that the current language in Standard 2-14, which states: *"Graduates must be competent in providing dental hygiene care for all types of classifications of periodontal disease including patients who exhibit moderate to severe periodontal disease."* accurately expresses the expectation that graduates of dental hygiene programs be competent in treating the range of periodontally involved patients, including those with moderate to severe periodontal disease, and that students understand when to refer patients that require advanced treatment. The Committee also noted that the Commission's Standards for postdoctoral periodontics programs use the terms "moderate to severe" when classifying periodontitis cases; therefore, this terminology appeared to be appropriate for continued use in the Dental Hygiene Standards.

Following lengthy discussion, the DH RC believed that Standard 2-14 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs, as currently written, accurately and completely expresses the scope of dental hygiene care that a graduate must be competent in providing to the periodontally involved patient population. As such, the DH RC believed Standard 2-14 should be retained as written and there should be no revision of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs at this time.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct there be no revision at this time to Standard 2-14 (types of classifications of periodontal disease) of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs.

**Report on Dental Hygiene Programs Annual Survey Curriculum Section (p. 401):** The Dental Hygiene Review Committee (DH RC) noted that the Annual Survey Curriculum Section is reviewed during the Winter Review Committee meeting in the year the survey will be distributed, which will next occur in August 2023. At this meeting, the DH RC considered its discipline-specific Annual Survey Curriculum Section (**Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 401**). Following consideration, the DH RC determined that the Annual Survey Curriculum Section should be retained with no changes for use in August 2023.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct the Dental Hygiene Annual Survey Curriculum Section (**Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 401**) be retained with no changes for use in August 2023.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Dental Hygiene Education Standards and Reporting Mechanisms:** The Dental Hygiene Review Committee (DH RC) discussed a variety of topics related to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs and program reporting mechanisms related to enrollment increases.

First, the Committee discussed Standard 2-8 related to general education courses, and specifically the intent statement that states: “*General education, social science, and biomedical science courses included in the curriculum should be equivalent to those offered in four-year colleges and universities.*” The Committee noted that many states impose a cap on the total credits required to obtain a degree, resulting in dental hygiene programs eliminating required general education courses (for example, oral and written communication, psychology, sociology, etc.) from the curriculum, opting to instead include content in these topics within the dental hygiene core courses. Since the Standards indicate that a separate course is not required, the DH RC believed that the intent statement, noted above, and the Standards should be reviewed to ensure clarity in the expected level of foundational knowledge in general education and biomedical sciences content required within a dental hygiene curriculum.

Second, the Committee discussed Dental Hygiene Standard 3-6, specifically related to faculty documentation of current knowledge in the subjects they teach. The Committee noted that further review of this Standard is warranted due to the variability of information submitted to the Commission.

Third, the DH RC has seen significant growth in enrollment increase requests in the last year. The Committee noted that dental hygiene education programs submit enrollment increase requests using the Commission’s Guidelines for Reporting a Program Change. The Program Change Guidelines provide a general format and mechanics to report several types of changes

within a CODA-accredited program but no specific guidance on reporting a request for enrollment increase. Following discussion, and in accordance with other disciplines within the Commission's purview, the DH RC believed that dental hygiene-specific enrollment increase report guidelines should be developed to guide the CODA-accredited dental hygiene programs in the documentation that must be submitted to assurance the Commission that an increase in enrollment is well supported by the program and its sponsoring institution.

Following discussion of these topics, the DH RC believed that the Review Committee should conduct Ad Hoc meetings of available members in Spring 2023 to further discuss these matters and, as appropriate, submit a report to the DH RC and Commission for further consideration in Summer 2023.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct the Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education to conduct Ad Hoc meetings of its available members in Spring 2023 to further discuss the Dental Hygiene Standards related to general education courses and faculty qualifications, and reporting mechanisms related to enrollment increases, with a report for further consideration by the Dental Hygiene Review Committee and Commission in Summer 2023.

#### **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 SITE VISITOR APPOINTMENTS TO THE COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION IN THE AREA OF DENTAL HYGIENE EDUCATION**

The Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education considered site visitor appointments for 2023-2024. The Committee's recommendations on the appointments of individuals 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,

Dr. Susan Kass  
Chair, Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education