

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

Committee Chair: Dr. Monica Nenad. Committee Members: Ms. Denise Avrutik (virtual), Dr. Linda Boyd, Dr. Ngoc Chu (virtual), Ms. Mara Crow, Dr. Marcia Ditmyer, Ms. Patricia Guenther, Dr. James Harrison, Dr. Lorie Holt, Ms. Joanne Pacheco, Dr. Carole Palmer, Dr. Paul Francis Tayag Ayson, and Ms. Maiga Van Haalen. Guests (Open Session Only, Virtual): Ms. Rebecca Stolberg, vice president, Allied Dental Education and Faculty Development attended the policy portion of the meeting. Staff Members: Ms. Katie Navickas, manager, Allied Dental Education, Ms. Jamie Asher-Hernandez, manager, Allied Dental Education, Mr. Daniel Sloyan, coordinator, Allied Program Reviews, and Ms. Zaira Perez-Lemon, senior project assistant, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). Dr. Sherin Tookes, senior director, CODA, and Ms. Samara Schwartz, 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 8-10, 2024 at the ADA Headquarters, Chicago, Illinois.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO DENTAL HYGIENE EDUCATION

Informational Report on Dental Hygiene Programs Annual Survey Curriculum Data (p. 400): The Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education (DH RC) noted that data of the Annual Survey Curriculum section for dental hygiene education is reviewed as an informational report, when the materials are available following data collection and analysis. All survey data is considered confidential at the programmatic level.

At the Winter 2024 meeting, the DH RC considered and discussed the most recent data for the Curriculum Section of the Commission's Annual Survey for dental hygiene education (**Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 400**). The Curriculum Section of the Commission's Annual Survey is conducted for dental hygiene education in alternate years. The most recent Curriculum Section was conducted in September/October 2023. The Committee had no additional comments related to the report at this time.

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

Consideration of Faculty to Student Ratios in Accreditation Standards (p. 401): At its Winter 2023 meeting, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) considered a letter from 17 state dental associations related to workforce shortages in dental assisting and dental hygiene education programs. The Commission discussed the letter and directed that a formal letter be sent to the state dental associations requesting additional information on the request, and that an Ad Hoc Committee be established to consider ratios within the Commission's Accreditation Standards. The Ad Hoc Committee conducted an extensive review of the issues surrounding the state dental associations' request. Following review of faculty to student ratios in Accreditation Standards, the Ad Hoc Committee submitted its report found in **Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 401**, to the Commission for consideration at its Summer 2023 meeting.

In Summer 2023, the Commission reviewed the report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty to Student Ratios in Accreditation Standards. Following review, the Commission concurred with the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee and directed that

the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty to Student Ratios in Accreditation Standards be provided to the Review Committees that oversee dental assisting, dental hygiene, dental laboratory technology, and dental therapy education for further consideration and review, including determination if revisions of Accreditation Standards are warranted, with a report to the Commission in Winter 2024. The Commission also directed that there be no development of a policy or process for rationale that must be followed when revising Accreditation Standards related to faculty to student ratios, and that a copy of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty to Student Ratios in Accreditation Standards be provided to the state dental associations.

At its Winter 2024 meeting, the Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education (DH RC) reviewed the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty to Student Ratios in Accreditation Standards. The Committee began with a review of the Ad Hoc committee findings and a brief discussion outlining the other possible factors outside of education that should be considered related to the allied dental education workforce shortage. The DH RC noted that the top three factors negatively affecting program enrollment in dental hygiene programs are: 1) program capacity, 2) ability to hire faculty, and 3) the cost of education. The DH RC discussed the possibility that the faculty-to-student ratios are one of many factors negatively impacting the allied dental education workforce. Other possible negative influences affecting the allied dental education workforce shortage were noted by the Committee, including the increasing wage gap between clinical hygienist and dental hygiene educators, the physical demands of the clinical dental hygiene profession, and career expansion outside of clinical dental care. Nonetheless, the DH RC and Commission have considered a large number of enrollment increases and program expansions since the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Committee noted the information found in the report on Resolutions Adopted by the ADA House of Delegates and the ADA Board of Trustees Related to the Commission on Dental Accreditation and Dental Education (**Policy Report p. 1802**), and specifically discussed Resolutions 408H-2023 and 409H-2023 related to faculty-to-student ratios. The request for transparency related to the reasoning of the current one (1) to five (5) faculty-to-student ratio found in Dental Hygiene Education Standard 3-5 was discussed at length by the Committee.

The DH RC noted the revision history for Standard 3-5 that outlines the faculty-to-student ratios in dental hygiene education programs, which was provided in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Ratios. It was noted that the current faculty-to-student ratio has been in place since 2016. The Committee also noted that other dental education disciplines may not have explicit Standards related to ratios, however, it was believed that institutions consider the need for an appropriate learning environment for dental education programs based on the need for proper supervision of students that have limited skills manipulating surgical instruments subgingivally while administering treatment to patients safely.

The Committee also discussed the following concerns and related factors that could affect the dental hygiene education programs, should the faculty-to-student ratio be increased, including: the effect on the quality of clinical education for students if higher ratios were implemented; the effect on clinical course hour requirements; the increased wait time for patients in the clinical education setting related to negatively impacting the dental hygiene programs' patient pool; the possibility of decreasing availability of adjunct faculty due to the inability to work more hours

within the contracted teaching hour requirement of the institution, which would require more faculty to be hired in a program; and the barrier related to new faculty hiring pool limitations with regard to Dental Hygiene Standard 3-Administration and Faculty.

Related to the Dental Hygiene Standards, the DH RC discussed how a change in the required degree, through a degree completion requirement rather than current degree attainment, in both Standard 3-2 and 3-6 could be reviewed based on the continued discussion of a limited faculty pool in the dental hygiene field. To that end, the Review Committee discussed including a possible time frame for achieving the current degree required by the Standards rather than eliminating the degree criteria all together. It was also discussed by the DH RC that Standard 3-2 and 3-6 had recent revision related to degree requirements that were circulated to the communities of interest prior to their recent adoption. The DH RC also noted that some institutions require faculty to hold a degree to teach in academic programs, and some institutions require that faculty hold a degree higher than the degree awarded to the students.

Following discussion, the Dental Hygiene Review Committee believed that more information is needed to understand faculty-to-student ratios in dental hygiene education programs and to further consider this matter. The Committee additionally concluded that further data and research are suggested to establish the need to retain the faculty-to-student ratio at one (1) faculty to five (5) students, or to increase the faculty-to-student ratio to one (1) faculty to six (6) students. The DH RC also concluded that dental hygiene education Standards 3-2 and 3-6 should be reviewed for further consideration of possible barriers related to the ability of hiring qualified program administrators and faculty.

As a result of the discussion, the Dental Hygiene Review Committee recommended that an Ad Hoc Committee be directed to further study this matter and to review the faculty-to-student ratios in the clinical setting, and faculty requirements to teach in a dental hygiene education program. In completing this work, the Ad Hoc Committee could complete a literature review related to the current faculty-to-student ratios found in Standard 3-5, and further study dental hygiene Standards 3-2 and 3-6 related to faculty degree requirements and how those Standards may negatively impact the ability of programs to hire faculty and expand enrollment within dental hygiene education programs. The DH RC believed that representation from dental hygiene education and predoctoral dental education would be valuable and suggested that the Commission invite nominations from the American Dental Education Association (ADEA). The Ad Hoc Committee would therefore be comprised of six (6) members of the DH RC, one (1) dental hygiene educator and one (1) predoctoral dental educator, selected by CODA from a group of nominees submitted by ADEA.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation direct appointment of an Ad Hoc Committee to Study Dental Hygiene Standards Related to Ratios, and to research and review the current faculty-to-student ratios (Dental Hygiene Standard 3-5) and faculty degree requirements (Dental Hygiene Standards 3-2 and 3-6), within the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs, with a future report to the Commission on Dental Accreditation.

It is further recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation invite the

American Dental Education Association (ADEA) to submit the names of qualified nominees for selection by the Commission to fulfill the positions of one (1) dental hygiene educator and one (1) predoctoral dental educator on the Ad Hoc Committee to Study Dental Hygiene Standards Related to Ratios.

Consideration of Proposed Revisions to Improve Diversity in Dental and Dental Related Education Programs (p. 402): On December 1, 2023, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) received a letter from The National Coalition of Dentists for Health Equity (TNCDHE) found in **Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 402**. In its letter, TNCDHE provides short-term and long-term suggestions to CODA to improve diversity in all academic dental, allied dental, and advanced dental education programs.

At its Winter 2024 meeting, the Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education (DH RC) reviewed the letter from The National Coalition of Dentists for Health Equity. The Review Committee began its discussion noting the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging and the possibility of addressing the various recommendations of the TNCDHE through revisions of the dental hygiene education Accreditation Standards.

The Committee also noted that many states have laws that prohibit many types of diversity standards in education due to the new Supreme Court decision; however, the Committee believed further discussion on how the incorporation of language that helps to establish diversity in the dental hygiene student population could be explored. The Committee also noted that the current CODA site visitor nomination application does not include sections related to the race or ethnicity of the nominee at this time, and further consideration of including that information in the future was noted.

The Committee believed that currently the dental hygiene Standards do not address diversity and should be analyzed further based on data provided by programs through the Dental Hygiene Education Annual Survey that correlates specifically to demographics of possible underrepresented populations of students. The Committee noted that the dental hygiene education Standards currently address different patient populations in Standard 2-12 (i.e., child, adolescent, adult, geriatric, and special needs); however, the Standard does not specifically discuss diversity (e.g., race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc.) as a patient population graduation requirement that students must be competent to treat. It was also noted that the Dental Education Standards currently include requirements related to diversity, which could serve as a reference point during consideration of the Dental Hygiene Standards.

Following discussion, the Committee concluded that the topic of this magnitude should be further considered by the DH RC through a separate Ad Hoc Committee comprised of all DH RC members. The DH RC recommended that prior to its Ad Hoc Committee meeting, each member should individually re-review the information provided by the TNCDHE in its December 1, 2023 letter, review the Dental Education Standards related to diversity, and review the current Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs with diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in mind.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation

direct an Ad Hoc Committee of members of the Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education to further consider the issue of diversity in dental hygiene education programs, including potential revision to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs, with a report to the Commission at the Summer 2024 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Matters Effecting Dental Hygiene Education Programs: The Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education (DH RC) discussed two (2) topics related to interpretation of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs.

First, the DH RC considered program administrators for dental hygiene education programs that may be remotely located from the program's campus. The DH RC considered whether there should be oversight of remote program sites by an on-site individual who reports to the program director. The DH RC noted that some advanced dental education Standards require an on-site supervisor at remote program locations. Following discussion, the DH RC noted it will monitor trends in remote program locations for dental hygiene education.

Second, the DH RC discussed the role of a clinical dentist regarding their status as a faculty or a supervising clinical dentist for practice compliance of the dental hygiene clinic. The Committee noted that the supervising dentist is not considered part of the faculty-to-student ratio unless the dentist provides instruction and evaluation of students, in which they would be required to meet faculty requirements of the Accreditation Standards. The DH RC determined that no action was needed by the Commission at this time.

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

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 2024-2025. 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. Monica Nenad
Chair, Review Committee on Dental Hygiene Education