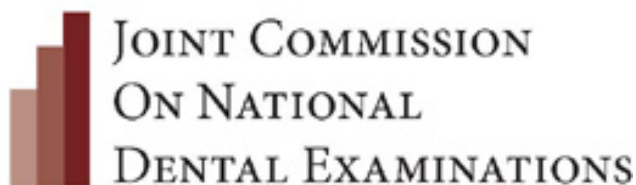


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Secretary's Notes

Spring 2009

Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations Annual Meeting

It has been a year since this electronic newsletter was inaugurated. The goal of the newsletter remains keeping you informed and updated on issues related to the Joint Commission's National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examination Programs. This issue of the newsletter will focus mainly on the annual meeting of the Joint Commission which occurred on April 7-8, 2009. The meeting took place at the American Dental Association headquarters in Chicago, and actions were taken on a variety of issues. A summary of the major actions is provided below.

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Strategic Plan

At its 2008 meeting the Joint Commission appointed an *ad hoc* committee to develop a strategic plan. One outcome of the work of this committee was the development of a mission statement that will provide direction to the examination programs for five years. The Joint Commission, in addition to the mission statement, adopted a series of related goals and objectives.

Mission Statement

"The JCNDE develops and conducts highly reliable, state of the art cognitive examinations that assist regulatory agencies in making valid decisions regarding licensure of oral health care professionals; develops and implements policy for the orderly, secure, and fair administration of its examinations; and is a leader and resource in assessment for the oral health care profession."

Committee for an Integrated Examination (CIE)

One objective of the strategic plan addresses the future of Part I and Part II. The Joint Commission approved the appointment of a *Committee for an Integrated Examination (CIE)* to develop and validate a new examination instrument for dentistry that integrates basic, behavioral, and clinical sciences to assess entry level competency in dental practice. The new examination would replace Part I and Part II. No specific time frame was set for implementation of the new examination but it is anticipated that it may take at least five years before this examination would be available for use. In developing the new examination, input from all stakeholder groups is seen as a critical part of the process.

International Testing

In 2008 the Joint Commission appointed an *ad hoc* committee to gather information and develop a potential framework with specific criteria for international testing. Based on the recommendations of the committee, the Joint Commission adopted a resolution indicating that it would consider international sites for the administration

of the National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examinations only after the successful completion of Commission on Dental Accreditation approval of the dental educational programs in the country requesting examination. A framework of criteria that should be considered in determining whether to establish international testing locations was also adopted.

Examination Issues

The Joint Commission considered a number of issues related to the development, administration, and scoring of the examinations.

Part II Cases

The Joint Commission approved increasing the number of cases on Part II while decreasing the number items nested within cases where practically possible. This decision was based on research findings that indicate this change in structure will enhance score reliability.

Pass/Fail Scoring

The Joint Commission remains committed to the implementation of pass/fail scoring for Part I and Part II as well as for the Dental Hygiene examination. However, the Joint Commission approved of a delay in the transition from a reporting of numerical scores to a pass/fail reporting system from January 1, 2010 to January 1, 2012. The Joint Commission specified that individuals taking the examination before January 1, 2012 will retain their numerical scores.

The decision to delay implementation was made to allow key stakeholders more time to prepare for the transition, especially state boards that may need to amend their practice acts.

Alternative Testing Delivery Methods and Forensic Studies

The Joint Commission will be exploring the use of alternative testing delivery methods, testing windows and the use of software for forensic analyses.

Examination Regulations and Standing Rules

During a review of the *Examination Regulations* and *Standing Rules*, the Joint Commission approved one substantive change. The time limit for filing appeals related to examination irregularities was reduced from 60 to 30 days.

Examination Fees

As of January 2010 the total examination fee charged to candidates will be \$280 for Part I, \$345 for Part II, and \$285 for the Dental Hygiene examination.

Small Grants Program

As a part of its small grants program, the Joint Commission approved funding to support the research proposed by Elsbeth Kalenderian, D.D.S, MPH, Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, Harvard School of Dental Medicine. The project is titled *Early Performance in the Patient Doctor Relationship as a Predictor of Success in Dental Education*.

Submission of proposals for the next funding cycle will begin on July 1, 2010. For more information, check for updates on [ADA.org](http://ada.org).

DENTPIN

The Joint Commission approved the use of the Dental Education and Testing Personal Identification Number (DENTPIN) as the primary identification number for those candidates participating in the National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examination programs. An exact date for implementation of this system is still pending.

It is envisioned that candidates will use the ADA web site to apply for a DENTPIN number. With this number replacing the Social Security number, it will provide a unique identifier that may facilitate activities that have become increasingly difficult because of privacy concerns.

Test Constructors

The Joint Commission approved the reappointment of Dental Hygiene examination test constructors and the

appointment of primary and alternate test constructors for the Dental Hygiene examination for 2010. In addition, approval was granted for the reappointment and the appointment of primary and alternate test constructors for the National Board examinations for 2010.

Application information for individuals interested in being a test constructor can be found on [ADA.org](http://ada.org).

Election

Dr. Bruce D. Horn (AADE) was elected as chair and Dr. Stephen T. Radack, III (ADA) was elected as vice chair of the Joint Commission. Their terms will begin at the ADA annual meeting in October 2009.

Computerization of the Dental Hygiene Examination

The National Board Dental Hygiene Examination became available in a computerized format at the end of 2008, and the last print version was administered in March 2009. The transition has gone smoothly with increasing numbers of candidates applying and taking the examination each month. Watch for the next newsletter for more information about the first six months of testing.

If there is additional information you would like to see covered in these newsletters, your comments and suggestions are encouraged and welcome. You can reach me by email at kramerg@ada.org.

Sincerely,



Gene A. Kramer, Ph.D.
Secretary, Joint Commission On National Dental Examinations

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