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

Committee Chair: Ms. Deanna Stentiford. Committee Members: Ms. Julie Bera, Ms. Margaret Bowman-Pensel, Dr. James Day, Ms. Carol Johnson, Ms. Carol Little, Ms. Nichole Magnuson, Ms. Martha McCaslin, and Dr. Debra Schneider. Ms. Dorothea Cavallucci attended the meeting via conference call. Guests (Open Session Only): Ms. Cindy Durley, executive director, Dental Assisting National Board, Ms. Sidonia Peto, education director, American Dental Assistants Association, and Ms. Rebecca Stolberg, senior director, Allied Dental Education and Faculty Development, American Dental Education Association attended the policy portion of the meeting. Commission Staff: Ms. Michelle Smith, manager, Allied Dental Education and Mr. Daniel Sloyan, senior project assistant, Allied Dental Education, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). Dr. Sherin Tooks, director and Ms. Cathryn Albrecht, senior associate general counsel, CODA, attended a portion of the meeting. The meeting of the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) was held on January 9-10, 2020 at the ADA Headquarters Building.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATED TO DENTAL ASSISTING EDUCATION

Informational Report on Dental Assisting Programs Annual Survey Curriculum Data (p. 300): As directed at the Winter 2015 meeting, the DA RC reviewed the aggregate data from the Curriculum Section of the Commission’s Annual Survey for dental assisting programs conducted in September/October 2019. Upon review of the data, the DA RC noted that it may revise its Curriculum Section instrument prior to its next implementation due to the Accreditation Standards revisions as a result of its Validity and Reliability Study, effective July 1, 2020.

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

Consideration of the Use of the Term “Should” Within the Accreditation Standards (p. 301): At its Summer 2019 meeting, the Commission directed the revision or addition, as applicable, of the definition of “Should,” within the Definition of Terms used by the Commission in the Accreditation Standards for all disciplines within the Commission’s purview, with consideration of this change in Winter 2020, and application within a time frame to correlate with other revision activities.

At this meeting, the Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education (DA RC) reviewed the use of the term “Should” within the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs (Appendix 1, Policy Report p. 301) and considered whether revisions to the Accreditation Standards are warranted as a result of the revised definition of the term “Should.”

The DA RC noted that the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs did not have a definition of “Should” within the Definition of Terms Used in Dental Assisting Accreditation Standards. The DA RC recommended the addition of the “Should” statement to the Accreditation Standards within the Definition of Terms, as follows: Should: Indicates a method to achieve the standard; highly desirable, but not mandatory.
Following discussion, the DA RC recommended that the revised Definition of Terms be adopted and implemented, effective July 1, 2020, to coincide with the newly adopted Standards.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt the definition of “Should” as noted above within the Definition of Terms in the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, effective July 1, 2020.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Consideration of a Proposed Definition of “Dental Emergencies” in the Definition of Terms of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs:** The Dental Assisting Review Committee (DA RC) noted that there has been an increase in citations to Standard 2-9 related to identifying and responding to dental emergencies. The Review Committee noted that there is some confusion among site visitors and dental assisting programs as to what constitutes a dental emergency. Therefore, the DA RC recommended a definition of “dental emergencies” be added to the Definition of Terms Used in Dental Assisting Accreditation Standards to clarify dental emergencies. Since this definition provides clarification and the revised Standards will be implemented July 1, 2020, the DA RC believed that this definition could be implemented in the July 1, 2020 Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, without circulation to the communities of interest.

(Addition is underlined)

**Dental Emergencies:** Those emergencies treated by a dental professional.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt the proposed definition of “Dental Emergencies” as noted above within the Definition of Terms in the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, with implementation July 1, 2020.

**Consideration of Proposed Revision to Dental Assisting Standard 2-11:** The Dental Assisting Review Committee (DA RC) reviewed Standard 2-11 with regard to the additional functions defined by the program’s state-specific dental board or regulatory agency, that graduates are authorized to perform. The DA RC noted that there is confusion among site visitors, dental assisting programs, and state dental boards as to the level, depth, and scope of these additional functions taught in CODA-accredited programs, and that many states have numerous functions that a dental assistant may perform. Due to the length of dental assisting programs and the current Standard 2-11 language related to the “must” statements within the Standard, the DA RC noted that programs may include some but not all allowable additional functions within their curriculum as part of the CODA-accredited dental assisting program. Conversely, additional functions may be taught following graduation and outside of the program. Therefore, the DA RC recommended revising Standard 2-11, to clarify that programs can elect to include the additional functions defined by the program’s state-specific dental board or regulatory agency, and that students are to be informed about the duties for which they are trained. Since this Standard was revised for clarification purposes and the new Standards will be implemented July 1, 2020, the
DA RC believed that this revision could be implemented in the July 1, 2020 Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, without circulation to the communities of interest.

(Additions are underlined; deletions are stricken)

2-11 Where graduates of a CODA-accredited program are authorized to perform additional functions defined by the program’s state-specific dental board or regulatory agency, and the program has chosen to include those functions in the program curriculum, the program curriculum must include content at the level, depth, and scope required by the state. Further, curriculum content must include didactic and laboratory/preclinical objectives for the additional dental assisting skills and functions. Students must demonstrate laboratory/preclinical competence in performing these skills in the program facility prior to clinical practice. Students must be informed of the duties for which they are trained in the educational program.

Intent:
Functions allowed by the state dental board or regulatory agency for dental assistants are taught and evaluated at the depth and scope required by the state. The inclusion of additional functions does not compromise the length and scope of the educational program or content required in the Accreditation Standards.

Examples of evidence may include but are not limited to:

a. Place and/or remove retraction cord
b. Take final impressions
c. Place, pack, finish restorations
d. Perform polishing of coronal surfaces of teeth
e. Perform pit and fissure sealant application
f. Perform cement removal
g. Perform restoration polishing
h. Perform monitoring and/or administration of Nitrous Oxide-Oxygen analgesia
i. Remove sutures
j. Perform pulp vitality tests
k. Place and remove periodontal dressing
l. Perform orthodontic functions

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt the proposed revision to Dental Assisting Standard 2-11 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, with implementation July 1, 2020.

Consideration of Proposed Revision to Dental Assisting Standard 3-7: The Dental Assisting Review Committee (DA RC) reviewed Standard 3-7 with regard to faculty qualifications. The DA RC noted that many dental assisting programs employ dental hygienists as faculty. Currently, the intent statement permits licensed dental hygiene faculty who teach dental radiography to teach dental assisting students without obtaining additional certification.
However, coronal polishing and the placement of pit and fissure sealants were not included in the additional functions that may be taught to dental assisting students by a dental hygienist. These functions are within the scope of practice for licensed dental hygienists.

Additionally, there are many dental assisting and dental hygiene programs offered at the same institution with licensed dental hygienists teaching in the dental assisting and dental hygiene programs. The intent statement as currently written could find a program out of compliance if a dental hygienist was teaching coronal polishing or pit and fissure sealant placement to dental assisting students if the licensed dental hygienist did not hold the Dental Assisting National Board “Certified Dental Assistant” credential. Therefore, the DA RC recommended revising Standard 3-7, to clarify that licensed dental hygiene faculty who teach coronal polishing and the placement of pit and fissure sealants do not require additional certification to teach these functions. Since this Standard was revised for clarification purposes and the new Standards will be implemented July 1, 2020, the DA RC believed that this revision could be implemented in the July 1, 2020 Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, without circulation to the communities of interest.

(Addition is underlined; deletions are striken)

3-7 Laboratory, preclinical and clinical faculty must hold any current dental assisting credential required by the state in addition to a Dental Assisting National Board “Certified Dental Assistant” credential*.

**Intent:**

Faculty members teaching additional or expanded dental assisting functions should be credentialed appropriately in those functions as required by the state. Faculty who are state-licensed dentists are not required to obtain additional certification. Licensed dental hygiene faculty who teach dental radiography, coronal polishing, and the placement of pit and fissure sealants would be eligible to teach these functions dental radiography to dental assisting students without obtaining additional certification.

**Examples of evidence to demonstrate compliance may include:**

- Copy of certification certificate or card
- Copy of license or dental credential
- Clinical faculty have recent experience in the application of four-handed dentistry principles
- Curriculum vitae

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Commission on Dental Accreditation adopt the proposed revision to the intent statement of Dental Assisting Standard 3-7 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Assisting Education Programs, with implementation July 1, 2020.

**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 ASSISTING EDUCATION

The Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education considered site visitor appointments for 2019-2020. 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,

Ms. Deanna Stentiford
Chair, Review Committee on Dental Assisting Education