REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON REVIEW COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

Background: At its August 2019 meeting, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), through its Standing Committee on Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning (QASP), considered a request from the American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists (ASDA) to establish a separate Review Committee for dental anesthesiology. Following consideration of, and in accordance with, the QASP recommendations, the Commission directed the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Review Committee and Commission Structure and Function to study the Commission’s Review Committee and Board of Commissioners structure and function, with consideration of appropriate Commission policies and development of new policies, as applicable, to established criteria by which the Commission may assess the need for a change in CODA’s structure. The Commission further directed the Ad Hoc Committee to consider how a change in the Commission’s Review Committee and Board of Commissioners structure and function will impact the Commission, and how a change may be implemented, including the Ad Hoc Committee’s recommendations on the potential need for change in the Commission’s current structure. Finally, the Commission directed that a report be submitted for the Commission’s consideration in Summer 2020.

In fall 2019, the Commission Chair appointed the following individuals to the Ad Hoc Committee: Dr. Linda Casser, Dr. Monica Hebl, Dr. Bradford Johnson (chair of ad hoc committee), Dr. James Katancik, Dr. Sanjay Mallya, Dr. Marsha Pyle, Dr. Marybeth Shaffer, and Ms. Deanna Stentiford.

The Ad Hoc Committee conducted tele-/web-conference calls on October 29, 2019 and December 4, 2019. Below is a summary of the activities related to the Ad Hoc Committee’s meetings.

October 29, 2019 Meeting: All Ad Hoc Committee members were present for the first meeting. Dr. Arthur Chen-Shu Jee, chair, and Dr. Jeffery Hicks, vice chair, Commission on Dental Accreditation, ex-officio, were also in attendance. Additionally, Dr. Sherin Tooks, director, CODA, Mr. Gregg Marquardt, manager, CODA, and Ms. Cathryn Albrecht, senior associate general counsel, ADA/CODA, were in attendance.

The Ad Hoc Committee initiated its first meeting with a review of the history of and charge to the Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee also reviewed meeting materials and proposed materials for future meetings, which included: 1) the Committee’s charge, 2) reports leading to development of the Ad Hoc Committee, 3) current policies on the Commission’s structure and function, and 4) a topical outline of potential data to gather for committee consideration related to the Commission’s current structure, scenarios for potential restructure, and policy implications including, for example, information on CODA’s current structure at each level of the Commission and workload considerations, the number of accredited programs, the number of CODA volunteers, potential factors related to restructure scenarios, data on prior restructures of the Review Committees, and data on the structure of other accrediting agencies.
The Committee noted several factors that should be considered through review of the Commission’s structure and function, including the Commission’s current and future strategic plan, the potential future landscape of dental education, the Commission’s current structure strengths and weaknesses, CODA’s capacity to operationalize changes and resource implications (e.g., volunteers, staff, facility, infrastructure, technology), requirements of the United States Department of Education (USDE), and policy implications.

The Ad Hoc Committee discussed several key concepts related to the Commission’s structure and function at all levels of the organization. The Committee engaged in preliminary discussion related to the concepts of equitability and efficiency in the Review Committees’ composition and operations, noting that CODA revised its Review Committee structure in 2006. The Ad Hoc Committee also considered and discussed CODA’s policy to request additional Review Committee members to support increases in workload. The Ad Hoc Committee further discussed the structure of Review Committees, Commission and the Appeal Board in accordance with USDE regulations. The Committee noted that 12 Commissioner appointees [four (4) American Dental Association (ADA), four (4) American Dental Education Association (ADEA), and four (4) American Association of Dental Board (AADB)] are prescribed in the ADA Bylaws, which would require an ADA House of Delegates action to amend. Regarding the Appeal Board, the Ad Hoc Committee noted that further review is warranted to ensure the appeal board membership includes appropriate individuals to consider each appeal. Additionally, the Ad Hoc engaged in preliminary discussions related to CODA’s leadership structure (i.e., chair and vice-chair) noting that CODA may want to consider formation of an executive committee.

Following lengthy discussion, the Ad Hoc Committee requested that Commission staff obtain additional information to provide a graphical representation of CODA’s structure, and to gather additional information on the history of CODA’s structure, the composition of each level, and further details on the number of programs and volunteers to support each level of Commission oversight.

**December 4, 2019 Meeting:** All Ad Hoc Committee members except Dr. Marsha Pyle were present for the second meeting. Dr. Jeffery Hicks, vice chair, Commission on Dental Accreditation, ex-officio, was also in attendance. Additionally, Dr. Sherin Tookes, director, CODA, Ms. Michelle Smith, Ms. Jennifer Snow, and Ms. Peggy Soeldner, managers, CODA, were in attendance.

The Ad Hoc Committee initiated its second meeting with a review of the agenda materials that were prepared, which included: 1) a history of CODA’s structure, 2) a graphical representation of CODA’s site visitor, Review Committee, Commission, and Appeal Board structure and the role of each level of Commission oversight, 3) current policies on the Commission’s structure and function, 4) the number of programs and current accreditation status in each discipline, 5) the number of programs and CODA volunteers in each discipline at each level of the Commission, 6) CODA’s meeting date schedule, format for meetings (e.g., in-person versus virtual) and cost implications for each meeting, 7) information on possible Review Committee
structure options considered previously by CODA in Summer 2018, and 8) historical resources related to the Commission’s prior consideration of its structure and function.

The Ad Hoc Committee noted CODA’s historic structure began with a 12-member Commission in 1974, which was changed to a 20-member Commission in 1975 when the ADA House of Delegates transferred dentistry’s accreditation program from the Council on Dental Education to the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Dental and Dental Auxiliary Education Programs. The 20-member Commission included the original 12 members and an additional eight (8) members [two (2) dental specialists, one (1) dental hygienist, one (1) dental assistant, one (1) dental laboratory technician, one (1) student representative, and two (2) public representatives]. In 1997, the Commission adopted revised Rules and its membership changed to the current 30-member structure of today.

The Ad Hoc Committee also discussed the current structure of Review Committees, noting that the size of each committee is dictated by a need for diverse representation and workload. It was noted that some advanced dental education committees include five (5) members while others include six (6) members. In accordance with CODA policy, a Review Committee may request additional members as the workload increases. The Ad Hoc Committee also noted CODA’s recent revisions to the structure of the Review Committee on Advanced Education in General Dentistry, General Practice Residency, Dental Anesthesiology, Oral Medicine and Orofacial Pain (AGDOO), which includes a joint appointment of this Committee’s chair by the sponsoring organizations of the five (5) disciplines represented on the Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee considered whether it should survey the existing Review Committees to obtain their perspective on the structure and operation but determined that a survey was not necessary at this time.

The Ad Hoc Committee discussed the number of programs, accreditation statuses, and number of volunteers at each level for each discipline under the Commission’s purview. The Committee also discussed preliminary restructure of Review Committees and the Commission, with discussion on the USDE requirements, particularly in the area of public member representation. The Ad Hoc Committee discussed whether CODA should reduce the number of Review Committees or reduce the membership on some Review Committees, due to the limited number of programs and/or workload under a Committee’s purview. The Committee determined that changes to the current structure must be well thought out and supported. It was noted that Review Committees with heavy workload meet in person, while Committees with less workload meet virtually; therefore, the cost impact to CODA is minimal.

The Ad Hoc Committee also considered the 2014 and 2015 work of the Commission through its Standing Committee on Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning, which included a comparative analysis of the Commission and other accrediting agencies related to the Commission’s structure, and potential alternative models for the structure of the Commission. The Ad Hoc Committee members believed that updated information in a similar presentation would be helpful. The Ad Hoc Committee also suggested that CODA’s Director speak with other accrediting agencies that have recently revised their structure to determine how they considered and accomplished this activity. While discussing other accrediting agencies, the Ad Hoc Committee noted that some
agencies select their members at all levels of the organization; it was noted that within the Commission, the Commissioners are appointed by sponsoring organizations, while Review Committee members and Site Visitors are selected appointed by the Commission.

Following lengthy discussion, the Ad Hoc Committee requested that additional information be collected for its next meeting, including: 1) current USDE regulations on composition of accrediting agencies, 2) an updated comparison of current and potential alternative models for CODA, 3) an updated comparison of the structure of health-related accrediting bodies including all levels (Review Committee and Commission) and applicable policies that govern the agencies with special emphasis on agencies that have recently modified their structure or function, 4) an informal environmental scan on the benefits and risks in making changes to CODA’s structure and function, 5) information on the number and types of site visits conducted annually for each discipline, 6) the last and next site visit date for each educational program under CODA’s purview, 7) CODA policy on structure and function, with areas of consideration highlighted, and 8) potential budget impacts to CODA related to its current and potential alternative structure and function.

**Ad Hoc Committee on Review Committee and Commission Structure and Function Recommendation:** This report is informational in nature and no action is required.

**Commission Action:**

Prepared by: Dr. Sherin Tooks