REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Background: The Standing Committee on Communication and Technology met on Monday, December 2, 2019 via teleconference. The following Commissioners serving on the Standing Committee participated in the discussion: Dr. Bradford Johnson (chair), Dr. Christopher Hasty, Dr. Sanjay Mallya, Ms. Ambika Srivastava, and Ms. Deanna Stentiford. Dr. Joel Berg, Dr. Adolphus Jackson, and Dr. Jan Lancaster were unable to attend. The Committee reviewed its charge as a reminder of its duties.

Commission Directives to the Committee: The Standing Committee reviewed ongoing progress on activities related to Commission directives or actions associated with the Standing Committee, with progress on these directives and actions (Appendix 1). Key topics related to ongoing communication and technology initiatives are highlighted below.

Monitoring Utilization of the Newsletter and Website: Per the Commission’s directive, CODA Staff continue to monitor usage of the Commission’s newsletter and website to identify areas where communication and functionality could be enhanced. The Committee reviewed web analytics, noting unique page views are up while time spent on each page is slightly down. The Find a Program page is the most popular page, with more than 92,000 page views in Q3 2019. This is an extremely important tool for CODA and staff spends significant time ensuring this page functions properly. Peaks in web views increased after CODA Alerts were sent in mid-August 2019, as related to the Unofficial Report, one of the most viewed reports circulated by CODA. Overall, web analytics appear to be as expected. The Committee also reviewed data from a newly-started analytics system which staff now uses to track the performance of CODA Alerts. The system showed a 48% open rate on the Unofficial Report of Major Actions, which is considered a very good rate for a professional email. Emails appear to perform as they should.

Electronic Accreditation System: The Committee learned that CODA Staff and the ADA’s Enterprise Solutions team continue to develop an electronic accreditation system for the use of CODA Staff, volunteers and programs. The Committee received an update of progress on the Aptify database (Phase I). The back-end database was implemented in August 2019 and the front end, a web portal accessible by programs and CODA volunteers, will begin during 2020 as Phase II of the development. The Committee discussed the project timeline and the need to thoroughly test/vet Phase II.

Staff will devote significant time and effort to testing in order to ensure the system is error-free before launch.

2019-2023 Communication Plan: The Standing Committee reviewed updates on various execution aspects of the 2019-2023 Communication Plan (Appendix 2). As part of that Plan, CODA continues to build webinars on various topics of interest, which are in process of being prepared for online publication.
**Technology Assessment and Strategy:** The Committee was informed of progress made on the Technology Assessment and Strategy plan (Appendix 3). The Committee noted that Zoom and Skype for Business will be used for conference calls and webinars beginning in early December. CODA will develop user guides to facilitate phone/video conference meetings for Standing and Review Committees.

**Annual Report to the Communities of Interest:**

At its Annual Meeting in Honolulu in October 2018, the American Dental Association’s House of Delegates adopted Resolution 39H, a governance change for the Commission on Dental Accreditation. The House of Delegates was also informed that there will be a new item, named “Annual Report,” under Article VII - MISCELLANEOUS of the Commission’s Rules.

The Committee discussed that, in accordance with these changes, beginning in 2019, the Commission on Dental Accreditation will not be required to submit to the House of Delegates the ADA’s Annual Report that is required of other ADA Councils and Commissions. However, CODA will instead develop an annual report to distribute to CODA’s broad community of interest, including the ADA. The CODA Annual Report will include information that is relevant to all of the Commission’s communities of interest.

The Committee discussed a draft of the Annual Report, with review of the Table of Contents and items for inclusion. The Committee will review and provide suggested content for future annual reports, upon review of the inaugural issue. The Committee noted the first CODA Annual Report will be disseminated in December as a wrap-up to CODA’s 2019 activities.

**Annual Mandatory Site Visitor Training:**

The Committee reviewed the Mandatory Annual Site Visitor Training program (Appendix 4), noting the items of training (topics) for the 2019/20 training year. The Committee also noted that in future years there would be a benefit to enhanced training for discipline-specific calibration and writing training.

**Communication and Technology Committee Recommendation:** This report is informational in nature, no action is required.

Prepared by: Mr. Gregg Marquardt
Review of Progress on Ongoing Commission on Dental Accreditation Directives or Actions Related to the Standing Committee on Communication and Technology (Winter 2020)

Commission directives noted in black, CODA progress made noted in red.

Summer 2015, Summer 2016 and Summer 2017 (ongoing directive):

Commission Action: Directing CODA staff to continue to monitor utilization of the newsletter and website to identify areas where communication and functionality could be enhanced.

- Staff reviews website utilization statistics regularly. Website statistics reviewed include page views, new visitors, bounce rate, and other data. Staff has completed a transition to Google Analytics, and a chart of website performance data, comparing Q2 and Q3 2019 and listing the performance of the top six visited pages, is available in TAB 2A. On an ongoing basis, staff also reviews performance analytics for each CODA Alert email. A chart of the performance of emails deployed in Q3 2019 is available in TAB 2A as well.

Summer 2015:

Commission Action: Directing investigation of electronic accreditation business tools available and utilized by other professional accreditation organizations.

Directing development and deployment of a survey of dental and dental related education programs to investigate the electronic accreditation tools used in academic settings and additionally the important aspects educational programs would like to see in an electronic accreditation platform used by the Commission.

- CODA staff and the ADA’s Enterprise Solutions team continue to develop an electronic accreditation system for the use of CODA staff, volunteers and programs. The system is based on an instance of Aptify built specifically for CODA. Development and user acceptance testing of the database replacement component of the electronic accreditation tool occurred from 2018 Q3 through 2019 Q2. The replacement of the former CODA DSA database occurred in August 2019.

- Phase II of the Aptify project will be to build and test the external, web-based portal to the system, also called the Online Accreditation Application and Self-Study Processes. This web-based portal will be used by program administrators and CODA volunteers to conduct accreditation and volunteering tasks. In Q4 2019, the Enterprise Solutions team and CODA Staff will begin planning the schedule for the development and testing of Phase II.
Summer 2017:

**Commission Action:** Directing Staff to develop a Communication Plan in regard to 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, for review by CODA in Summer 2018.

- In 2018, staff developed the *2019-2023 Communication Plan*, based on data and insights gleaned from the 2017 Communication Follow-Up Survey, and presented the Plan to the the Commission for consideration at the Summer 2018 Meeting. As directed by that Plan, staff has, to date:
  - Produced three webinars [Note: all CODA webinars have been offline since March 2019 due to formatting and server changes being made by the ADA Marketing team]
  - Added CODA branding to many of the documents used by Staff
  - Started design and production of Mandatory Annual Training for Site Visitors
    - Staff has chosen to utilize ADA Connect and other existing online tools to launch the initial iteration of Mandatory Annual Training
    - The launch date of Mandatory Annual Training is Dec 2019
    - The first year will be a trial period for the curriculum and the technology used
  - A working copy, with updates, is provided in TAB 2B; the original Plan is also provided to the Committee as a resource document.

**Technology Assessment and Strategy:** At its Summer 2017 meeting, the Committee discussed the Commission’s *Goal 1, Objective 4* of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, to look at creating a technology strategy to improve accreditation program efficiency and effectiveness. The technology assessment and strategy may require funding, which could be requested through the Commission’s Research and Development Fund. The strategy could allow CODA to gauge its current and future needs to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the CODA program.

- In 2017 and 2018, Staff conducted a technology audit and drafted the *Technology Assessment and Strategy 2019-2023* (available to the Committee as a resource document), which includes the audit results and an assessment of future hardware and software needs of the Commission.

- To date:
  - Staff has purchased earbuds with inline microphones for staff, to enhance sound quality while presenting conference calls and webinars.
  - In early September 2019, staff re-designed the architecture of the Site Visitor Materials site of ADA Connect. Structure and content were re-organized to improve the user experience.
  - In October 2019, the CODA staff offices in Chicago were re-designed. The new layout included two new meeting rooms specifically for CODA staff use. In addition to standard internet, wireless and telephone systems, the larger room will also feature a flat-screen display to replace the projector used previously.
  - As of Q4 2019, staff is increasing the use of Skype for Business, an instant messaging and online conferencing tool, and discontinuing use of ReadyTalk. Staff has also tested the use of webcam meetings within Skype for Business and has plans to conduct more webcam meetings in 2020.
○ CODA staff has requested a standalone video conferencing tool which looks similar to a smart speaker yet also includes a 360-degree camera atop the device which can recognize and highlight the person speaking. Staff will use the device for webcam meetings which involve multiple attendees in the Chicago office.
CODA Communication Plan 2019-2023

Review of Progress in Red

Background
At its July 6, 2017 meeting, the Standing Committee on Communication and Technology reviewed a survey data executive summary and the data results from a Communication Survey deployed in Spring 2017 as a follow up to the communication survey deployed in 2012.

The Standing Committee concluded that, based upon the 2017 Communication Survey, the CODA Communication Plan associated with the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan should be developed.

Statement of Purpose
This Plan provides communication execution details which supports specific Objectives of the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. The Standing Committee on Communication and Technology will present this plan to the Commission on Dental Accreditation at the CODA Summer 2018 Meeting.

Communication Environment Analysis
- CODA continues to develop its relationship with its organizational sponsor, the American Dental Association (ADA).
- As such, CODA continues to expand its operational and financial autonomy with its sponsor.
- With this come communication opportunities and logistics challenges for technology currently provided and supported by ADA shared services, including its websites for the public and for CODA volunteers, email processes, and more.
- Studies deployed by Commission staff, such as the 2017 Communication Survey, indicate most audiences (but not all) understand what CODA is and what it does as the USDE-recognized accrediting agency for dental and dental-related education programs.
- While other industries and their audiences have well-developed technological and social media practices, CODA’s audiences have yet to embrace advanced accreditation technology; plus, they indicate a strong preference for standard communication channels such as email and websites.

2017 Communications Survey
In Spring 2017, CODA Staff deployed a survey to its Communities of Interest to determine current attitudes toward CODA communications and preferences for specific communication channels. High-level results indicated:
- CODA’s community of interest continue to prefer email as a communication channel, with websites as a second choice;
- CODA’s community of interest also prefer webinars as a means of gaining information from CODA;
- CODA’s community of interest indicated no strong preference for video or social media tools such as YouTube or LinkedIn, and
- Findings suggest there is an increased level of understanding among the community of interest about the CODA-ADA relationship.
An Executive Summary Report is presented at the end of this Plan. Results data are available in Appendix 4 (1603_StandingCommitteeOnCommTech_Ap4_8-18.pdf).

Primary Communication Channels
- CODA Alert Email
- CODA Website
- On Demand Webinar (posted on Website)
- Presentation (speech + PowerPoint)
- ReadyTalk
- ADA Connect

CODA Personas
Frequent Communications
- Program Director
  - Concerned that their program maintain accreditation
  - Ensuring their programs comply with CODA standards
  - Want to know as much as possible about CODA process & deadlines
- Site Visitor
  - Eager to participate in the accreditation process
  - Doing it right
  - Instruction and training
- Community of Interest Member
  - Have an interest in dental education (faculty) and the profession (practitioners)
  - May be prospective or current students, patients, the public
  - Represent licensing bodies, certifying boards, and national professional membership organizations
  - Issues vary but want to ensure that students/residents are educated to safely and competently practice and serve as a positive representative of the profession.
- Review Committee / Appeal Board / Commission Member
  - Maintaining educational quality and the integrity of the dental profession
  - Carving out the time to review materials
  - Wants reports from site visitors and updates from staff

Other Groups with Whom CODA Communicates
- Constituent Dental Society
- United States Department of Education and other accrediting and state regulatory agencies
- Journalist
- Student / Resident [primarily through the “Find a Program” page on the CODA website]

CODA Goal 1:
The Commission on Dental Accreditation will be a leader in accreditation of dental education programs by recognizing the emerging areas of dental education, practice, research, and trends in higher education.

CODA Objective 5:
Create a comprehensive communication plan to enhance CODA visibility.
CODA Action Items:

- **By summer of 2017, CODA will conduct a follow-up survey of the 2012 Communication Survey to its communities of interest to assess its progress toward enhanced communication and report the results to the Commission.**
- **By winter of 2018, CODA will research methods to reach and communicate information to its varied communities of interest in association with review and revision of its communication plan.**
- **By summer 2018, CODA will review and revise its communication plan and strategies to address findings of the Communication Survey and identified best practices of communication with its stakeholders.**
- **Every 3-5 years, or as the need arises, and following development of the communication plan and strategies, survey CODA’s communities of interest to assess its effectiveness in responding to and communicating with stakeholders.**

Communication Objective:

- Increase the visibility and transparency of Commission actions

High-Level Communication Deliverables

- **[Continue late 2018 through 2023:] Use webinar technology to deliver live and on-demand training and informational webinars**
  - Webinars have been produced; however, all CODA webinars have been offline since March 2019 due to formatting and server changes being made by the ADA Marketing team.
- **[Begin late 2018, complete by attrition:] Brand All CODA stand-alone materials**
  - In progress
- **[2019 through 2023:] Use Aptify to communicate with accredited programs**
  - Message boards, dashboards and online alerts
  - Progress has been made on the Aptify backend tool. The “external-facing” web-based tool will be developed in 2020.
- **[Begin early- to mid-2019, ongoing:] Use online training software to train CODA volunteers**
- **Mandatory Annual Online Training to begin in December 2020.**
- **[Mid-2019:] Update the design of Communicator**
  - Work with the Web Content and Communications Manager to update layout
  - The Summer 2019 Communicator issue was updated with additional stock photography
- **[Mid- to late-2019:] Improve use of CODA Alerts**
  - Update the branding, layout and content of CODA Alerts
  - In progress; the Communication Manager has now acquired access to the email system in order to build and deploy CODA Alerts.
  - Increase the frequency of corrections and updates to mailing lists
  - In progress
- **[Mid-2019 through 2020:] Improve usage of CODA Website**
  - Re-organize the site architecture based on analytics data
  - Re-design website layout with more imagery
  - Launch automatic site visit schedules portal

Communication Metrics:
• Increase year-to-year CODA Alert Click rates
• Improve website user, download, and bounce rates
• Increase Communicator page visits

CODA Goal 2:
The Commission on Dental Accreditation will be a leader in the field in accreditation of dental education programs by ensuring long term sustainability in governance and autonomy, resources, best practices in higher education accreditation, and building relationship, partnerships and collaboration.

CODA Objective 3:
Build and strengthen relationships by enhanced communication with CODA’s communities of interest.

CODA Action Items:
• In accordance with the Communication Plan, develop communication and marketing tools to provide more information about CODA accreditation to CODA’s communities of interest, including its mission, vision, values, plans (including plans to enhance communication) and benefits.
• On a continuing basis, CODA staff will provide workshops and host hearings at national meetings (e.g., ADEA, ADA, other dental meetings) to foster relationships and provide current information about CODA, its mission, the benefit of accreditation and CODA’s activities.
• Annually, CODA will develop and/or update 2-3 webinars and/or reports on contemporary topics and will create and maintain a library that is accessible to CODA’s volunteers, program directors, and communities of interest.

Communication Objective:
• Increase knowledge about CODA among specific audiences

Topics Segmented by Personas and Other Audiences:
• Program Director: Maintaining a program’s accreditation
• Site Visitor: Annual training / Best practices for site visits
• COI: Updating “Advanced Education” Terminology in all CODA materials
• COI: CODA is the sole accreditor of U.S. dental and dental-related programs
• COI: Re-publishing external stories about or which mention the Commission
• COI: General Updates / Editorial and thought leadership articles
• Review Committee/Appeal Board/Commissioner Member: Process and best practices
• Annual CODA Report: deliver to CODA Communities of Interest

High-Level Communication Deliverables
• [Current through 2023:] Include message in as many pieces as possible that CODA is sole accrediting body of all dental and dental-related education programs in the United States
• In progress
Standing Committee on Communication and Technology  
CODA Winter 2020

- [Late 2018 through 2023:] Increase development and utilization of training and educational tools (webinars, training modules)
- In progress; Annual Mandatory Online Training to launch December 2019.
- [Early 2019 through 2023:] Produce & promote live webinar sessions
- [2020 through 2023:] Publish & promote editorial/thought leadership articles

Communication Metrics:
- Number of editorial articles published & webinars posted or held live
- Webinar Page: increase Page Visit rate
  - Track individual video downloads to determine topics of interest
- Feedback via next Communication Follow-up Survey in 2021
CODA Communication Survey 2017 – Executive Summary Report

Objective
To gauge awareness, effectiveness, and knowledge of CODA communications in order to craft a communications plan that addresses the express needs of all communities of interest, as well as to measure improvement in communication initiatives to those communities.

Methodology
An online survey sent to 2,675 Community of Interest individuals and 10,000 ADA member dentists on 4/10/2017 [In 2012 the survey was sent to 2,800 COI and 5,000 ADA members] The recipients received a reminder on 4/20/2017, ten days into the open survey, and the survey was closed on 5/5/2017, 25 days after launch. The response rate at the time of close was approximately one submission per day.

There were 702 COI respondents (26%) and 359 member dentist respondents (6.3%). [In 2012 there were 1,732 COI respondents (62%) and 509 member dentist respondents (10%)] 156 (43%) member dentists selected ‘not familiar at all’ on the first question and were exempted from all remaining questions except for organization affiliation [In 2012, 115 selected ‘not familiar at all (24%)] Member dentist responses on all other questions were sourced from the remaining 203 individuals. The margin of error was 3% for COI, 7% for member dentists.

Findings
For the most part, member dentists are far less informed and interested in CODA operations. These findings are similar to the results of the 2012 survey. When it comes to participating in CODA events, COI individuals are most interested in webinars, somewhat interested in ADEA annual meetings, and less interested in ADA meetings and open sessions (this also aligns with the 2012 survey findings).

The preferred method of receiving CODA communications is email (93.4% n=656); this preference has not changed from 2012. The preferred method of training is the webinar (50.8% n=357), which also aligns with respondents’ answers in the 2012 survey.

COI respondents showed little interest in social media as a means of CODA communication, with the exception of YouTube, which showed a slightly higher interest as compared to the other social media channels listed in the survey (22.8%, n=160). While this slight increase is not enough to warrant a formal CODA channel on YouTube, it does support the interest respondents have in webinar training and indicates they have a comfort level with obtaining information via online multi-media.

In 2012, respondents showed an interest in Facebook. However, because of the privacy and data security challenges which make Facebook a less viable communication tool for CODA, the social media platform was not offered as a choice in the 2017 survey.

COI individuals consider themselves well informed on CODA activities, which remains similar to the attitude respondents revealed in 2012. Readership of CODA Communicator and Alert emails is quite high, and most respondents feel the Communicator fulfills its objective (71%, n=498).
The primary sources for policy updates and accreditation decisions are the Communicator and the CODA website. The topic of most importance to COI individuals is ‘policy changes;’ in 2012, the topic of most importance was ‘accreditation status.’

Finally, one area that indicated strong improvement from the 2012 survey was respondents’ understanding of the relationship between CODA and the ADA. In the 2017 survey, 83% (n=583) of COI respondents chose the correct description of CODA as a “semi-independent agency of the ADA.” In 2012, 41% (n=709) chose correctly.
“By winter 2018 secure funding and conduct a formal technology audit to identify current and future technology needs to administer the accreditation program.”
“By winter 2018 identify existing internal and external resources to assist in advancing technological strategies to ensure best accreditation practices.”

Note: The Commission’s use of Accounting and IT services of the ADA are managed through “shared services” and will be dictated by an agreement that is still under development.

Current Audit
Software Licenses / Free Tools
- Outlook
- ReadyTalk
- LockLizard
- Knowledge Center: Announcements, Newsfeed, Discussion Boards
- ADA Connect: Announcements, Discussion Boards, Ballots
- Qualtrics [survey tool managed by ADA]
- SiteCore [website build tool managed by ADA]
- Infinity Analytics [website analytics tool managed by ADA]
- COVEO [website search analytics tool managed by ADA]
- HighRoad [email deployment and analytics tool managed by ADA]
- NetSuite [financial management tool managed by ADA]
- Skype for Business [via the ADA]
- Five (5) Owned Website Domains

Hardware [all via the ADA]
- Laptop computers
- Projectors
- Nortel phones
- Boardroom: AV system; phone & speaker system; recording system

Future Needs¹
Software Licenses
- Adobe Acrobat Professional for Managers [$161.88/license/year]
  - According to the ADA’s IT Department, most CODA staff are using Acrobat DC Professional because they need the redacting feature
- Aptify
  - CODA is currently in a long-term project to manage the accreditation process online
  - Future expenses for CODA to maintain and enhance the site are to be determined
- Camtasia [Webinar creation software, as opposed to ReadyTalk] [$200]
  - Camtasia would incur an initial cost but is a fully onboard system with an editing functionality which performs better than ReadyTalk
- Blackboard CourseSites or Canvas or Moodle [Training software]

¹ The future CODA facility (to be determined) may require additional technology such as projectors, television screens, teleconference phones and other electronics for a CODA meeting space.
Annual Mandatory Training – Learning Management System

[From QASP Report, Ap.1, 8-18:] Objective: To develop and implement annual, mandatory online training for the Commission on Dental Accreditation’s active accreditation site visitors. The annual training program will ensure that site visitors have an ongoing, comprehensive understanding of the Commission’s current policies and procedures, and accreditation standards and their application to site visits. The training program will also provide a mechanism to calibrate site visitors in each discipline under the Commission’s purview related to the interpretation and application of specific standards in accordance with the Commission’s expectations of the requirements.

Desired Functionality for Annual Mandatory Training:
- Categorize the training
- Create web screen, audio and video training modules
- Register the student and assign courses to that student
- Deploy the training
- Test the student online
- Provide real-time scoring
- Track and archive all the above

ADA Connect and Qualtrics
- Use ADA Connect to post learning materials
- Use Qualtrics as a scoring tool
- Anticipated launch: December 2019

2019 Curriculum:
Interpreting the Standards
- Review one Standard common to all disciplines (i.e.: Institutional Effectiveness)
- Provide Sample Scenarios
- Include input of Review Committees as appropriate

Completing the SVER
- Explain the difference between a “Recommendation” and a “Suggestion”
- Explain how to construct the Recommendation and the Suggestion
- Accuracy:
  - How to complete the SVER in its entirety
  - How to address each yes/no
  - How to address the policies section
  - Outcomes assessment prompts

Working with Major Changes to Policy, Procedures, Logistics and/or Standards
- Share major changes occurring within the past year which will impact site visits

Qualtrics Quiz
- 15-20 questions
  - Include scenarios with sample interpretations (choose between “Acceptable Interpretation” or “Not Acceptable Interpretation” as the answer to each scenario)