

Date: February 10, 2011

To: National Board Dental Examination Stakeholders

From: Dr. Mark Christensen, Chair, Committee for an Integrated Examination
Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations

Subject: Update on the Progress of the Joint Commission on National Dental
Examinations Committee for an Integrated Examination (CIE)

This is the second communiqué to update stakeholder groups on the progress of the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE) CIE. The task of the CIE is to develop and validate a new integrated examination that will replace NBDE Part I and Part II. This is a long-term project that is expected to take a minimum of five years. The CIE recognizes that a change of this magnitude has implications for many stakeholder groups and intends to keep all stakeholders informed of the committee's progress and solicit comment and feedback from all stakeholder groups as the project progresses.

The new examination will integrate basic, behavioral, and clinical sciences to comprehensively assess the knowledge and cognitive skills and abilities needed for entry-level competency in dental practice. For the new examination to be truly integrated, a process for combining basic and clinical sciences into single examination must be developed and validated. A necessary first step in this process is identification of the domain of knowledge (basic science and clinical science) and cognitive skills and abilities needed for dental practice. Identification of this Domain of Dentistry is a priority because it becomes the foundation for subsequent steps in examination development.

Since the last update in July 2010 there have been two additional meetings of the CIE: a workgroup charged to identify the Domain of Dentistry met in July 2010 and the entire committee met in November 2010.

The Domain Workgroup initially reviewed the current 65 clinical competencies used in the 2005 practice analysis for NBDE Part II. It also considered the ADA *2005-06 Survey of Dental Services Rendered*, CODA's *Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs*, *Competences for the New General Dentist* (ADEA 2008), *Foundation Knowledge for the New General Dentist* (ADEA CCI in 2010), as well as information from other sources. The Workgroup then developed a revised list of clinical competencies which have been forwarded to the JCNDE's Research and Development Committee (R&D) for consideration. The R&D Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the JCNDE regarding the competencies that are used when a practice analysis is conducted for NBDE Part II. A new practice analysis for NBDE Part II is planned for 2011.

To address the identification of basic biomedical and behavioral science competencies, the Workgroup reviewed how other professional groups have defined the basic biomedical and

behavioral science competencies that underlie their professions. One document reviewed by the Workgroup was *Scientific Foundations for Future Physicians a Report of the AAMC-HHMI Committee* (available at <http://www.hhmi.org/grants/sffp.html>) which identifies basic biomedical and behavioral science competencies that underlie the practice of medicine. The document also provides examples of how these competencies can be broken down and related to clinical practice. The Workgroup decided to use a similar approach to identify the basic biomedical and behavioral sciences that support the clinical competencies identified as essential for dental practice. This work then culminated in the development of a draft Model of the Domain of Dentistry. The Model provides a way to demonstrate links between the clinical sciences and basic biomedical and behavioral sciences that inform the practice of dentistry.

At its November 2010 meeting, the CIE further refined the draft Model of the Domain of Dentistry and developed plans for initial validation of the Model. An outside panel of experts composed of clinically focused dentists who have expertise in the basic sciences will meet to review the science competencies and validate the Model in the spring of 2011. Eventually both clinical and basic science competencies will form the basis of the test specifications for the new integrated examination.

The CIE plans to meet twice in 2011. The first meeting will focus on work done to validate the draft Model of the Domain of Dentistry. Once the CIE is satisfied that the draft of the Model is sound, it will be made available to stakeholders for comment.

Communication remains a priority for the CIE. As work progresses and documents are developed, the CIE plans to post them on a dedicated web site for review and comment by all stakeholder groups. An initial FAQ document has been included with this update to address some questions that have arisen. The FAQ document will be updated as the project progresses and will be posted on the site as soon as the web site is functional. An update on committee activity will also be featured in each edition of the JCNDE newsletter which can be found on the JCNDE website at <http://www.ada.org/2288.aspx>.

The CIE welcomes comment and encourages recipients to share this communiqué with interested persons who are not on its mailing list. Comment and feedback can be sent to the CIE by email to jcndecie@ada.org. While individual responses are not possible, the committee reviews all comments and questions. Those who have received this memo indirectly and would like to be added to the CIE's mailing list can be added to the list by sending email to jcndecie@ada.org with "mailing list" as the subject line.

MC/JK/s