

# Periodic Review of Dental Specialty Education and Practice

June 2025



National Commission on Recognition of  
Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards

# Background

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- In 1992, the American Dental Association (ADA) House of Delegates adopted Resolution 144H-1992 directing the Periodic Review of Dental Specialty Education and Practice be conducted every ten (10) years beginning in 2001.
- In 2001 and 2011, the Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) conducted the review. With the establishment of the National Commission in 2017, the Periodic Review became the responsibility of the National Commission who adopted policy to continue the practice of conducting the review every ten (10) years.
- In 2020, the National Commission conducted the review. The National Commission's 2021 Periodic Review of Dental Specialty Education and Practice Report can be reviewed on the National Commission's website at: <https://ncrdscb.ada.org/recognized-dental-specialties>



# Periodic Review Purpose

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- The purpose of the Periodic Review is to aid the National Commission in gathering strategic information that is of value to the National Commission, the profession and the public related to:
  - Current environment
  - Changes occurring with the specialty education and practice environments (e.g. disease trends, technology, program enrollments and demographics, board certification, scope of practice)
  - Potential future trends
  - Changes in the delivery of oral healthcare
  - How these trends may impact the public and the profession



# Periodic Review Process and Timeline

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- In March 2022, the Board of Commissioners adopted a staggered cycle of completion of the Periodic Review to be conducted over a four (4) period.
  - In 2029, three (3) recognized specialty sponsoring organizations will complete the Periodic Review
  - In 2030 three (3) recognized specialty sponsoring organizations will complete the Periodic Review
  - In 2031 three (3) recognized specialty sponsoring organizations will complete the Periodic Review
  - In 2032 three (3) recognized specialty sponsoring organizations will complete the Periodic Review.
- Upon completion of the first full round of the staggered Periodic Review cycle, all of the recognized specialty sponsoring organizations will be back to a ten (10) year interval that corresponded with the revised staggered cycle.



# Periodic Review Process and Timeline

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- National Commission officially notifies the specialty sponsoring organizations twelve (12) months prior to the consideration of the Periodic Review by the National Commission. The next Periodic Review will be conducted in 2030 so the specialty sponsoring organizations will be sent notification in 2029.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations have nine (9) months from the official notification to submit a draft of their Periodic Review report to the National Commission.
- The Review Committee on Specialty Recognition will review the draft reports for completeness. Any reports needing clarifications, additional information, and/or revision will be returned to the specialty sponsoring organization for revision.
- Draft reports must be finalized one (1) month prior to the annual meeting of the National Commission when the final report is approved.



# Periodic Review Process and Timeline

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- Following consideration of the final Periodic Review report, the National Commission will make one of the following recognition status determinations for each specialty sponsoring organization:
  - The *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties* continue to be met and the sponsoring organization is granted the continued status of *Recognition*.
  - The *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties* may not be met- additional information needed and the sponsoring organization is granted the recognition status of *Recognition with reporting requirements*.
  - The *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties* are not met, specialty recognition should be withdrawn and the sponsoring organization is granted the recognition status of *Recognition, with reporting requirements, intent to withdraw*. The sponsoring organization will be given six (6) months to come into compliance prior to recognition being withdrawn.
  - The *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties* are not met and recognition is *Withdrawn*.
- Withdrawal of recognition is an adverse action. Specialty sponsoring organizations have the right to appeal any adverse decision to the Appeal Board regarding the Periodic Review of that specialty.



# Completing the Periodic Review

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- It is the expectation of the National Commission that the Periodic Review is submitted on time. If the specialty sponsoring organization needs additional time, please contact National Commission staff.
- While the National Commission limits responses to 300 words, if the specialty sponsoring organization does not believe they can provide a succinct response in 300 words, please contact National Commission staff about submitting additional information.
- The National Commission asks that with all responses only necessary and required documentation be submitted. If the specialty sponsoring organization submits documentation that is not necessary or required, the Periodic Review will be returned to the specialty sponsoring organization with the directive to revise the response and resubmit the Periodic Review within a specified time frame.
- The submitted Periodic Review and supporting documentation are the official historical documentation that is retained by the National Commission. Because of this, the specialty sponsoring organizations are not to submit live web links and/or hyperlinks as part of their responses. If the specialty sponsoring organization places the above mentioned links in the Periodic Review, the document will be returned to the specialty sponsoring organization.



# Periodic Review Sections

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- Periodic Review is divided into four (4) sections:
  - **Section I:** General Information and Demographic Data of the Specialty
  - **Section II:** Major Research Initiatives and Technology Advances
  - **Section III:** Trends in Specialty Education
  - **Section IV:** Changes in Scope of Practice





# Section I: General Information and Demographic Data

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- Gathers information on the following areas:
  - History of the Dental Specialty
  - Compliance with the current *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties*
  - Strategic Planning
  - Description of Specialty Membership



# Section I: History of the Dental Specialty

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide a summary of the history of the dental specialty. The response should include:
  - When the sponsoring organization and certifying board were incorporated.
  - When the sponsoring organization was recognized by the American Dental Association and/or National Commission.
  - A relevant history of the specialty as it relates to recognition of the specialty in the United States.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



# Section I: Compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition*

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide documentation exhibiting that the current *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties* are being met.
  - There are six (6) *Requirements for Recognition* that must be addressed in their proper order.
  - Responses should be a bulleted item under each specific Requirement.
  - Responses should be succinct and limited to 300 words.
- The *Requirements for Recognition* can be found on the National Commission's website at: <https://ncrdscb.ada.org/recognized-dental-specialties>



# Section I: Strategic Plan

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- In order to understand what each of the specialty sponsoring organizations envisions as its future role in improving and providing oral health services to the public; each of the specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide a copy of the organization's mission statement, goals and strategic plan.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to also provide a brief summary highlighting specific areas of the strategic plan that the specialty wishes to call to the National Commission's attention.
- The National Commission will not accept a list of goals in lieu of a strategic plan. If the organization does not have a strategic plan, the National Commission strongly encourages the organization to develop one.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



# Section I: Efforts to Promote Quality in the Specialty

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested provide brief comments on the efforts the specialty has undertaken to promote quality in the discipline over the past ten (10) years.
  - Discussion points could include:
    - Continued competency
    - Defining parameters of care
    - Continuing education
    - Evaluating board certification protocols
    - Updating handbooks and/or reference materials to reflect current practices
    - Advancing quality of care through research
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



# Section I: Specialty Membership and Certification

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide data related to:
  - Total number of specialty membership in five (5) different categories:
    - Active Membership
    - Associate Membership
    - Affiliate Membership
    - Life Membership
    - Non-Specialist Members

It is the organizations responsibility to explain how they interpret each of the different membership categories and the criteria that is used to place members in the different categories.

Based on the requested data, the specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide over comments related to:

- Membership trends for the previous ten (10) years.
- Membership trend forecasts for the next ten (10) years.
- Comments on how changes in membership will impact the public and the profession.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



# Section I: Specialty Membership and Certification

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide data related to gender and ethnicity of its membership and discuss past and future trends related to gender and ethnicity.
  - If the data shows upward or downward trends, the expectation is that these trends are explained. If there are downward trends, it is suggested that the organization explain why the trend occurred, what was done or will be done correct the downward trend.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.
- In the 2020 Periodic Review, the National Commission found that only half of the recognized specialty sponsoring organizations collected gender and ethnicity data. The National Commission strongly encourages all the recognized specialty sponsoring organizations start routinely tracking gender and ethnicity data.



## Section II: Major Research Initiatives and Technology

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to examine the impact of major dental research, changes in the delivery of oral health care, and new technology on specialty practice over the last decade.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to list major research initiatives and major technology advances over the ten (10) year period.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide comments on how these changes and advances have affected the practice of the specialty over the ten (10) year period.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to provide an overview on changes in the delivery of oral health care and explain how the changes have impacted the practice of the specialty.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.





## Section III: Trends in Specialty Education

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- Gathers information on data that has been collected by the American Dental Association Health Policy Institute's *Survey of Advanced Dental Education Annual Reports* related to the number of Commission on Dental Accreditation accredited advanced education programs, program enrollments and faculty.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations will be provided with data related to:
  - Number of advanced dental education programs in the discipline
  - Combined total enrollment in the advanced dental education programs in the discipline  
Whether the program director is full or part-time
  - Whether the program director is board certified
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are required to provide overview comments on past and future trends.
  - If the data shows upward or downward trends, the expectation is that these trends are explained. If there are downward trends, it is suggested that the organization explain why the trend occurred, what was done or will be done correct the downward trend.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



## Section IV: Changes in Scope of Practice

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- Gathers information on the specialties scope of practice, specifically epidemiological data, principle health services provided, and setting(s) where care is provided.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to highlight recent epidemiological data or studies that establish the incidence and/or prevalence of major conditions routinely diagnosed and/or treated by practitioners in the specialty and describe how these changes have affected the practice of the specialty.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to highlight recent epidemiological data or studies that:
  - Establish the incidence and/or prevalence of major conditions routinely diagnosed and/or treated by practitioners in the specialty.
  - How these changes have affected the practice of the specialty and the future practice of the specialty.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



## Section IV: Changes in Scope of Practice

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- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to identify the principle health services provided to the public by individuals in the specialty including:
  - Whether this has changes over the ten (10) year period.
  - If it has changed, describe what the impact has been on the profession and the public.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.
- The specialty sponsoring organizations are requested to identify the setting(s) in which these services are customarily provided including:
  - Whether this has changes over the previous ten (10) year period.
  - If it has changed, what has been the impact on the profession and the public.
- The response is to be succinct and limited to 300 words.



# Changes in Definition and/or Scope of Practice

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- While completing the Periodic Review, the specialty sponsoring organizations should review the specialty's definition to ensure that it is accurate and up to date. If a definition needs to be modified, this would be the appropriate time to request a definition change. (See Policy and Procedure Related to a Recognized Specialty's Request for Change in Name, Definition and/or Scope of Practice) <https://ncrdscb.ada.org/policies-and-procedures>
- At the completion of the Periodic Review, if a specialty sponsoring organization determines that the specialty's scope of practice has significantly changed, the specialty sponsoring organization may want to consider submitting a request to the National Commission related to changes in the scope of practice. (See Policy and Procedure Related to a Recognized Specialty's Request for Change in Name, Definition and/or Scope of Practice) <https://ncrdscb.ada.org/policies-and-procedures>



# National Commission Expected Results

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- At the conclusion of the Periodic Review, the National Commission expects to find the following results:
  - The specialties continue to be in a healthy state.
  - Each specialty is unique.
  - Based on the scope of practice of each specialty, there continues to be a need and demand by the public for the recognized specialties.
  - Each of the recognized specialties demonstrated ongoing efforts to improve the quality of advanced dental education, research, practice and oral health care services.

