

The Role of the National Commission in Protecting the Public

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National Commission on Recognition of
Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards

Introduction

- The National Commission protects the public and the profession through objective and transparent review of the recognized and prospective dental specialty sponsoring organizations and certifying boards based on the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*.
- The specialty recognition program administered by the National Commission plays a role in protecting the public by:
 - Ensuring Quality
 - Protecting Against Political Influence
 - Serving as the Only Oversight System
 - Improving Accountability and Transparency
 - Strengthening Relationships
 - Helping Identify and Address Oral Health Priorities



What is the National Commission

- The National Commission is a semi-autonomous agency of the American Dental Association that recognizes dental specialty sponsoring organizations and their respective certifying boards based on compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*.
- The National Commission has the sole authority to grant or deny recognition to the dental specialties and their respective certifying boards.
- The National Commission is independent in its decision-making process for the recognition of dental specialties and their respective certifying boards, ensuring that best Commission practices are followed, and biases and conflicts of interest are avoided at all times.



Philosophic Underpinnings of the National Commission

- Quality assurance to protect the public and ensure long-term viability of the profession.
- Public protection and information
- Self-improvement of the programs under the purview of the Commission
- Decisions that are consistent, transparent and free from bias or conflict of interest and
- Strong policies related to integrity, confidentiality and due process to ensure all decisions are transparent and free from bias



What is a Dental Specialty?

- A specialty is a discipline of dentistry that has a separate, distinct and well-defined focus based on unique advanced knowledge, skills and training that has been formally recognized by the National Commission as meeting the "*Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialists*".
- Dental specialties are recognized to protect the public, nurture the art and science of dentistry, and improve the quality of care in disciplines of dentistry in which advanced knowledge, skills and training are essential to maintain or restore oral health.
- Not all disciplines in dentistry will satisfy the requirements for specialty recognition and there should be no expectation that all disciplines in dentistry will meet the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties*.



Protection of the Public By Ensuring Quality

- The National Commissions specialty recognition program helps ensure that the recognized specialty sponsoring organizations and recognized certifying boards meet quality standards that are outlined in the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*.
- The *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists* contain criteria that sponsoring organization and certifying board applicants and the recognized specialty sponsoring organizations and certifying boards must meet in order to become and/or remain recognized by the National Commission.
- As an independent Commission, the National Commission addresses real and perceived conflicts of interest and bias in the decision-making process and conforms to the national standards and public expectations on establishing objective processes for applying standards and making high-stakes decisions.
- The National Commission treats all the recognized organizations equally based on the criteria outlined in the *Requirements for Recognition*.



Protection of the Public Against Political Influence

- The role of the Board of Commissioners is to make recommendations and decisions on specialty and certifying board recognition for the overall good of the profession and protection of the public.
- When making decisions, all Commissioners have a fiduciary responsibility to make unbiased decisions that are in the best interests of the public and the profession.
- As an independent Commission, the National Commission has the sole authority to make recognition decisions without interference from external organizations such as the American Dental Association, the recognized dental specialty sponsoring organizations and certifying boards and other members of the National Commission's communities of interest.
- The National Commission aligns with the national standards and public expectations on establishing objective processes for applying standards and making high-stakes decisions.



Protection of the Public By Serving as an Oversight System

- A central component of the National Commissions operations is the impartiality of its decision-making.
- Each Commissioner has a personal duty to avoid real conflicts of interest or even the appearance of conflicts of interest. The potential for a conflict of interest arises when a member's duty to make decisions is compromised by competing interests of a personal or private nature.
- The National Commission bases all recognition and re-recognition decisions on a recognized organization's compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition*.
- Clear procedures for due process, as well as strict guidelines for all written documentation and recognition decisions reinforce adherence to transparent and fair practices.
- The National Commission has the autonomy and final authority in all matters related to specialty recognition.



Protection of the Public By Improving Accountability and Transparency

- One of the roles of the National Commission is to provide accurate, timely and transparent information to the public and communities of interest related to specialty recognition and re-recognition and the activities of the National Commission.
- The National Commission bases all recognition and re-recognition decisions on a recognized organization's compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition* and treats all the recognized organizations fairly and equally based on the criteria outlined in the Requirements for Recognition.
- The National Commission has developed clear procedures ensuring due process, as well as strict guidelines for all written documentation and recognition decisions reinforce adherence to transparent and fair practices.



Protection of the Public By Strengthening External Relationships

Over the next five (5) years, the National Commission will focus on:

- Increasing the understanding of the role of the National Commission within the profession, healthcare community and the public.
 - Enhancing the communication between the National Commission and the American Dental Association, the recognized dental specialty sponsoring organizations and certifying boards and the state dental boards.
 - Communicating with state dental boards to educate them on the role and past successes of the National Commission.
 - Reviewing the current certification procedures utilized by the specialty organizations and certifying boards and identify significant differences and emerging trends that may be expected in the future.
- By strengthening of these relationships, the National Commission will be able to provide greater education and protection to patients and the public as it relates to oral health care and the importance of specialty recognition.



Protection of the Public By Identifying and Addressing Oral Health Priorities

- Through the Periodic Review of Dental Specialty Education and Practice that is conducted every ten (10) years, the National Commission gathers strategic information related to:
 - the current environment;
 - changes occurring within the specialty education and practice environments (e.g., disease trends, technology, program enrollments, and demographics);
 - potential trends for the future; and
 - changes in the delivery of oral health care and how these may impact the public and the profession.
- The information gathered from the Period Review helps the National Commission, American Dental Association, the recognized specialties and certifying boards, the public, patients and the profession identify changes in dental specialty education and practice.



In Summary

- The National Commission protects the public and the profession through objective and transparent review of the recognized and prospective dental specialty sponsoring organizations and certifying boards based on the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*.
- Every recognition and re-recognition decision made by the National Commission is based on compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition*.
- The ultimate goal of the National Commission is to gain acceptance as the nationally recognized authority on dental specialties and trends in dental specialty practice by the public, state dental boards and the profession.

