

**Unofficial Report of Major Actions**  
**Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations**  
**June 28, 2023**

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE) met at the American Dental Association (ADA) headquarters on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, and took the following actions:

1. Pursued efforts in support of the strategic direction of the Joint Commission, as it pursues its mission and vision. This includes the following:
  - Reviewed findings from the JCNDE's May 2023 strategic planning meeting, noting in particular the JCNDE's strong commitment to the DLOSCE and efforts to support DLOSCE utilization by dental boards throughout the US and its territories.
  - Monitored progress and efforts to design, construct, and implement the JCNDE's Dental Hygiene Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DHLOSCE). The DHLOSCE is proceeding on schedule, with an anticipated launch in the fourth quarter of 2024.
  - Directed staff to propose revisions to JCNDE governance documents and meeting schedules, to facilitate the nimbleness and agility of the JCNDE, providing timely consideration of important issues pertaining to the construction, implementation, and administration of National Board Examinations. The aforementioned revisions are anticipated to involve structuring JCNDE activities to permit greater involvement by all Commissioners, and periodic meetings of the full JCNDE throughout the calendar year (i.e., as opposed to convening separate standing committee meetings and a single annual meeting).
  - Reviewed findings from a JCNDE survey of dental boards, to better understand the potential need for a National Board Dental Therapy Examination (NBDTE). Based on these findings, the JCNDE directed staff to develop a business plan for a National Board Dental Therapy Examination (NBDTE), to further investigate the possibility of NBDTE development by outlining the anticipated requirements to design, construct, implement, and provide ongoing support for such an examination. A summary of findings from this survey are provided in Appendix A of this Unofficial Report of Major Actions.
  - Reviewed a presentation from the Council of State Governments (CSG) concerning a potential dental and dental hygiene licensure compact that is under consideration throughout the US. Commissioners noted that three states had enacted legislation involving this compact, while four states have legislation pending.
2. Strengthened and aligned the JCNDE's efforts to fairly and accurately assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities of aspiring oral healthcare professionals, to provide comprehensive and precise evaluation for licensure purposes.
  - Adopted strategic goals and a roadmap to help set the strategic direction for the Dental examination programs of the JCNDE. This included the following:
    - Directed staff to review the standard for the Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE), with subsequent review by the JCNDE, and implementation of any potential changes to the standard to take place no sooner than January 1, 2024. As a reminder, from an operational perspective the standard for an examination is a criterion-referenced cut score that is used to determine whether an individual passes or fails the examination.
    - Directed staff to conduct a practice analysis for the dental examinations of the

JCNDE, with a corresponding practice analysis survey to be administered in approximately the fourth quarter of 2024.

- Reviewed and refined strategic goals and the JCNDE’s roadmap that helps set the strategic direction for the Dental Hygiene examination programs of the JCNDE. This included the following:
    - Approved dental hygiene task statements for use in the JCNDE’s 2023 Dental Hygiene Practice Analysis Survey, which will help guide future content development efforts on the NBDHE and DHLOSCE to help ensure these examinations continue to be relevant and aligned with current dental hygiene practice. These task statements will be released shortly to communities of interest, to solicit and incorporate additional feedback before the statements are formally included in the aforementioned practice analysis survey.
    - Directed staff to continue pursuing the implementation of early termination multi-stage adaptive testing for the NBDHE, with a target implementation date no sooner than 2026. Staff were also directed to provide a corresponding progress report to the JCNDE in 2024, indicating any barriers, concerns, or other issues that could impact the successful implementation of early termination multi-stage adaptive testing for the NBDHE.
  - Approved a set of external psychometric consultants to help provide guidance to the JCNDE, as needed. These technical consultants were selected based on their advanced expertise in areas pertaining to specific upcoming JCNDE initiatives. Their terms of service will extend through July 31, 2025.
3. Approved actions to help ensure content appearing on Joint Commission examinations is of the highest quality, accuracy, and relevance, through the application of carefully considered subject matter expert selection criteria, and the appointment and reappointment of highly qualified subject matter experts to serve as test constructors in support of the following examination programs:
- INBDE
  - NBDHE
  - DLOSCE
  - DHLOSCE
4. Approved actions in support of the continued fairness of administrations of Joint Commission National Board Examinations.
- Approved qualified applicants to serve as fairness and sensitivity reviewers to participate in a pilot fairness and sensitivity review process set to begin in 2023—or as soon as logistically feasible.
5. Improved operational efficiencies in known situations where candidate appeals involving JCNDE policies cannot be granted due to matters involving test security, operational constraints, etc. In these situations, appeals will be denied administratively. The list of such non-appealable policies include—but is not limited to—the following:
- the 60-day wait period between examination administrations
  - the four (4) attempt administration limit within a 12-month period
  - nullification of a test result or reimbursement of a paid administration due to complaints about particular test questions or accompanying stimulus materials (e.g., an image)
  - exceptions to the educational degree confirmation policy (i.e., for candidates educated by non-CODA-accredited programs)
  - adjustments or modifications to a test score.

6. Reviewed JCNDE communication activities and identified specific areas where additional communication is needed. Accordingly, staff were directed as follows:
  - Develop a communication plan to enhance awareness of the Image Portal by relevant stakeholders, including state and component dental societies.
  - Communicate to the dental education community that the JCNDE will be reviewing the standard for the INBDE, with implementation of any potential changes to the standard to take place no sooner than January 1, 2024.
  - Notify communities of interest concerning the dental hygiene practice analysis and solicit feedback on the JCNDE's dental hygiene task statements.
  - Provide information concerning multi-stage adaptive testing, to facilitate acceptance of this approach in the dental hygiene community.
  - Promote the Dental Hygiene Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DHLOSCE) to communities of interest, to build support and facilitate adoption of this examination when it is made available in 2024.
7. Approved the JCNDE's 2023 and 2024 budget proposal. The JCNDE recommended that 2024 candidate examination fees remain unchanged relative to the fees charged in 2023. Thus, 2024 candidate fees will remain as follows:
  - National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE): \$565
  - Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE): \$845
  - Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE): \$975
  - Processing fee for candidates educated by non-accredited institutions: \$350
  - Score report request fee (additional reports): \$50
8. Successfully convened the State Dental Board Forum on June 26, 2023, providing boards with the latest information on the National Board Examinations, and answering board member questions concerning the JCNDE and its examination programs.
9. Dr. Anthony E. Herro will serve as JCNDE Chair for the 2023-2024 term. The JCNDE also elected Dr. Peter Loomer to serve as Vice-chair during the aforementioned term. Their service in these roles will begin in October 2023.
10. The next annual meetings of the JCNDE are currently scheduled for June 26, 2024, and June 25, 2025.<sup>1</sup> The next annual State Dental Board Forums will occur August 19, 2024, and August 18, 2025.

Dr. John D. Da Silva (ADEA) Chair  
Dr. Anthony E. Herro (AADB) Vice-Chair  
Ms. Tami Grzesikowski (ADHA)  
Dr. Rachel E. Hogan (ADEA)  
Ms. Han-Na Jang (ADHA)  
Dr. M. Reza Iranmanesh (ADA)  
Mr. Tommy Lau (ASDA)  
Dr. Peter Loomer (ADEA)  
Dr. Julie W. McKee (AADB)

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<sup>1</sup> These dates are subject to change, in accordance with anticipated changes to JCNDE governance documents (see the first topic listed in this report). Should these dates be modified, the JCNDE will update this report with the final dates as soon as this information becomes available.

Dr. Jeetendra Patel (AADB)  
Dr. Frank E. Schiano (ADA)  
Dr. James R. Sherrard (Public Member)  
Dr. Mary A. Starsiak (AADB)  
Dr. Patrick J. Tepe (ADA)

Dr. Karin Irani, ADA Board Liaison  
Mr. Christopher Elkhail, ASDA Student  
Observer

## **Appendix A: JCNDE Survey of Dental Boards Regarding a National Board Dental Therapy Examination – Summary of Findings**

### ***Background***

In 2023, the JCNDE surveyed dental boards to better understand their need for a National Board Dental Therapy Examination (NBDTE). The survey was distributed on February 21, 2023 via email to dental boards in 54 jurisdictions (i.e., the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands). A total of 21 boards (i.e., 37%) completed all or part of the survey. The website dentaltherapy.org indicates that 13 states have authorized dental therapy in some or all settings. Among the responding boards, seven (7) were from a state that was listed on dentaltherapy.org as having authorized dental therapy. The JCNDE did not receive a response from the remaining six (6) boards from states that authorize dental therapy in some or all settings.

### ***Major Findings***

**Among respondents, most indicated that their state legislature held the authority to establish dental therapy as a licensed profession.**

**About a quarter of the responding dental boards are currently licensing dental therapists.**

- Five (5) of the responding dental boards (24%) indicated that dental therapists are currently being licensed within their jurisdiction. One (1) board indicated it will begin licensing dental therapists soon (i.e., in 2023 or 2024).
- Two (2) dental boards (10%) indicated that a decision to license dental therapists is currently under consideration within their jurisdiction – or will be soon.

**In total, the responding boards expect to license fewer than 250 dental therapists over the next five years.**

- Boards varied with respect to the number of dental therapists they expect to license over the next five years. One board indicated it expects to license 0-5 dental therapists during that time period, while another board indicated it expects to license 150 dental therapists.

**Respondents provided mixed feedback with respect to their potential utilization of a National Board Dental Therapy Examination.**

- **Cognitive Skills.** Three (3) of the responding dental boards indicated they would consider utilizing an NBDTE that measures cognitive skills, in fulfillment of their boards' cognitive skills requirements. Three (3) other boards indicated they would NOT utilize such an examination. The remaining 14 boards were unsure.
- **Cognitive Skills and Clinical Judgment.** Five (5) dental boards indicated they would consider utilizing a comprehensive NBDTE that measures cognitive skills and clinical judgment, in fulfillment of their boards' cognitive and clinical skills requirements. Two (2) boards indicated they would NOT utilize such an examination. The remaining 13 boards were unsure.

**Most respondents were unsure which method(s) of clinical skill assessment would be acceptable to their board.**

- Less than half of respondents indicated that manikin-based assessment of clinical skills would be acceptable to their board.
- Less than half of respondents indicated that alternative (i.e., non-manikin) methods of clinical skill assessment would be acceptable (e.g., computer-based examination involving 3D models, dental simulator, professionally developed psychomotor tests, etc.).
- Respondents' opinions on the acceptability of 3D models and the acceptability of dental simulators were nearly identical.