



# Report of Major Actions of the Board of Directors of the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. Discussed at its Annual Meeting

August 2005

Following each semiannual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB), DANB publishes a Report of Major Actions of and Project Updates Discussed by the DANB Board of Directors. This report is provided to each organization with representation on the DANB Board of Directors, and to other members of DANB's communities of interest as desired, and will be followed by that meeting's minutes when approved. In addition, DANB publishes each Report of Major Actions of and Project Updates Discussed by the DANB Board of Directors on the DANB website ([www.danb.org](http://www.danb.org)).

This Report, which reflects DANB's Board of Directors' August 2005 actions, is organized using the following categories: *Stakeholder Outreach*, *Candidate Issues*, *Certificant Issues*, and *Board of Directors – Specific Initiatives*.

## **I. STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH**

### **A. ADAA/DANB Alliance Position Paper to Be Published**

At the August 2005 Board meeting, the DANB Board reviewed a draft of the *Position Paper of the ADAA/DANB Alliance Addressing a Uniform National Model for the Dental Assisting Profession*. This paper recommends ways in which the results of the Core Competencies Research (drawn from the DANB/ADAA Study to Define and Rank Order Dental Assisting Core Competencies) might be implemented as a national dental assisting model.

The Board set August 22, 2005 as the date by which Board members must submit all final comments on the draft position paper to DANB Executive Director Cynthia Durley. The Board approved the position paper in concept and directed DANB to complete and publish this document by September 20, 2005, in conjunction with ADAA representatives and the ADAA/DANB Alliance.

### **B. Updates to the DANB Website**

The DANB Board confirmed the Strategic Planning and Marketing Committee's recommendations for cosmetic changes to DANB's website. These changes include the following: add DANB Board member information, add information about credentialing terms, replace current icons with tiles to link visitors to site pages, and create a DANB masthead for each webpage (incorporating DANB's trademarked slogan "Measuring Dental Assisting Excellence"). The Board also voted to receive the staff report defining tasks, timeline, and estimated costs associated with the renovation of DANB's website.

## **II. CANDIDATE ISSUES**

### **A. Report on the State of DANB National Exams**

Liz Koch, Director, Testing and Measurement, reported that DANB's exam eligibility pathways continue to yield statistically equivalent passing rates on the General Chairside (GC) component of the Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) exam, as desired. Plans for the future include a Content Validation Study for the Infection Control Exam (ICE), to be held in FY 05-06. A schedule for studies to be conducted through FY 11-12 was presented to the Board.

### **B. Possibility of Developing a New COMSA Exam Discussed**

In February 2004, DANB's Strategic Planning and Marketing Committee recommended, with Board support, that DANB staff take steps to assess the future of, support/recognition of, and interest in the Certified Oral and Maxillofacial

Surgery Assistant (COMSA) exam, which was discontinued in January 2000 due to low candidate numbers. These steps were to include conducting an online survey on the DANB website for Certificant feedback and communicating with the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) and individual oral surgeons to ascertain their level of interest in a new COMSA credentialing program and their willingness to support it.

Liz Koch, DANB's Director of Testing and Measurement, presented her report on the results of a joint AAOMS/DANB survey at the August 2005 Board meeting. Ms. Koch noted that separate surveys were distributed to various communities of interest to determine interest in reinstating the COMSA exam. DANB's goal was to determine whether the development of a new COMSA exam and certification program was feasible based on projected candidate numbers and support of oral surgeon employers. (Candidate numbers have a direct impact on the psychometric integrity [reliability and validity] of an exam program.)

Ms. Koch stated that if a new COMSA credentialing program is developed, grandfathering an assistant is not likely to be allowed because the new exam is likely to include Infection Control and Oral Maxillofacial Anesthesia components, which were not on the previous exam. If an assistant currently holds a CDA credential, the assistant may only need to take these two components if the exam is taken within five years of the assistant's Certification exam. However, if the new Certification program is a two-tier program (COMSA and COMSA plus an anesthesia designation), grandfathering current COMSAs might be possible.

The DANB Board directed the Executive Director to move forward with the development of the new COMSA credentialing program on the condition that AAOMS also approves it, and to offer to send a DANB representative to meet with AAOMS to discuss the potential development of a new COMSA credentialing program.

### **C. Update on Pilot Pathway IV, One-Time Extension Study**

At the August 2005 DANB Board meeting, Ms. Koch summarized the Results of CDA/GC Pilot Pathway IV (PPIV) Study, One-Time Extension. Applications for PPIV were accepted through March 31, 2005. One hundred eighty-two candidates submitted CDA/GC applications under the extension. Each candidate was given a 60-day window in which to test. The GC exam and GC component of the CDA exam were the only exams analyzed since these exams require educational pathways. Infection Control (ICE) and Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) do not have eligibility requirements and therefore were not included in the analysis.

(CDA/GC PPIV exam candidates were those dental assisting students who graduated from dental assisting programs accredited by an organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education but not the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation and who had accumulated at least six months' (600 hours dental assisting work experience.)

The final results confirm that candidates using CDA/GC PPIV were more likely to fail the GC exam, taken singly or as part of the CDA exam, than candidates using Pathway I (ADA-accredited dental assisting program graduates). CDA/GC exam pass rates of Pathway I candidates are statistically equivalent to CDA/GC exam pass rates of Pathway II candidates (on-the-job-trained with at least 3,500 hours of dental assisting work experience earned over a two- to four-year period).

The Board voted to accept the results of CDA/GC PPIV Study, One-Time Extension.

### **D. Modification of Candidate Services Policies**

1. The DANB Board made the following change, as underlined, to Policy II.203.4 of the Candidate Services Manual:

*"Submit Intent to Graduate Letter from the Program Director on school letterhead indicating that the director believes that the candidate will complete the dental assisting program within ninety (90) days following the date on the letter.*

*A current year graduate may qualify to take the CDA examination or the GC component examination if she/he will graduate no later than sixty (60) days after the examination date for which application is being made. Current year graduates may use the Intent to Graduate letter signed by the program director and printed on school letterhead.*

*Program directors are required to notify DANB in writing should any student for whom this statement was provided fail to graduate. In those cases, candidates' GC exam scores will be null and void."*

2. The Board modified Policy II.403 as follows (changes and additions are underlined):

"If a candidate's or certificant's check is returned for non-sufficient funds (NSF), a NSF fee to be determined by the Board will be required from the candidate. Results/certificates will be held until a new cashier's check or money order (exam fee plus NSF fee determined by the Board) is received. By law credit cards cannot be accepted for payment of non-sufficient funds.

If a candidate is registered to take a **computerized** exam and DANB receives a NSF check, the candidate will be informed that he/she will not be allowed to take the exam.

If a candidate is registered to take a **written** exam and DANB receives a NSF check, the candidate will be informed that he/she will be allowed to take the exam but will have the scores withheld until payment is made or for ninety (90) days maximum, at which time scores will become null and void.

If a certificant is renewing one or more credentials, the certificant will be informed that he/she will not be renewed and that their certificate(s) will be held until the certificant's renewal date or for ninety (90) days maximum at which time the credential will lapse and the certificant will need to reinstate.

Candidate will need to pay the NSF fee and all other fees and then reapply with full fees to retest.

If DANB receives a NSF check from a candidate/certificant, the candidate/certificant will not be allowed to purchase any other services/merchandise from DANB until the NSF fee and any other applicable charges are paid.

3. The Board modified Policy II.306 to read as follows (changes and additions are underlined):

"Acceptable documentation of high school graduation or equivalent should be either a copy of high school diploma, GED certificate, transcript indicating graduation, proof of college or post secondary coursework, or official state agency graduation verification."

"Foreign graduates must submit their education credentials to an independent ~~curriculum~~ credential/educational verification agency, either a National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES)<sup>®</sup> or American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) member."

For high school eligibility outside the United States (excluding Canada):

"Enclosed a photocopy of high school diploma/transcripts or post-secondary degree/transcript with a general equivalency report from either a NACES<sup>®</sup> member or AACRAO."

4. The Board added the following to Policy II.305 of the Candidate Services Manual:

"Applications accompanied by a DANB request form for Special Accommodations will NOT be returned as incomplete if the request is denied but will be processed and the candidate informed that they can either 1) test without requested accommodations, 2) submit a request to cancel (form included with the letter), or 3) provide the required information for the denial decision to be reversed by the date specified in the DANB incomplete letter. All pertinent DANB fees to cancel or reschedule apply."

5. The Board approved the following changes (underlined) to Policy II.602.2:

"DANB prefers that neither dental assisting educators, nor personnel integrally involved in a dental assisting program serve as DANB Examiners or Proctors. Anyone who offers review courses intended to prepare others to take one or more DANB examinations is NOT permitted to serve as a DANB Examiner or Proctor. However, in areas in which it is difficult to obtain Examiners or Proctors, dental assisting program directors, educators, and staff members, along with independent individuals, may administer any DANB examination upon approval by DANB. All persons that act as DANB Examiners or Proctors must sign and be bound by DANB's Confidentiality Policy. Examiners and Proctors must be familiar with and adhere to policies established in 'Procedures for Administering DANB Examinations.'"

6. The Board modified the **Special Testing Accommodations Policy** to read as follows:

"DANB offers an honorarium of \$100 per hour to Proctor/Readers for candidates approved for this Special Accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, based on the length of the exam."

7. The Board modified cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Policies II.203.1, II.205.1, and II.207.1, as follows (changes underlined):

To be acceptable, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and appropriate documentation must:

- have been taken within the last 2 years (1 year for American and Canadian Red Cross)
- include written and skills evaluation
- present an official card (copy of front and back) from the providing organization (see list below),
  - the card must be dated and signed or imprinted with the instructor's name
  - the card must have the candidate's name or signature on the card.
- be a DANB-accepted course authorized, sponsored, or conducted by the following:
  - American Red Cross
  - American Heart Association
  - National Safety Council (Green Cross)
  - American Safety and Health Institute
  - Medic First Aid (UK)
  - Canadian Red Cross
  - Saudi Heart Association
- The only exception will be for permanent disability proven with a doctor's statement.

8. The Board modified Policy II.601 as underlined:

"Staff will be responsible for establishing written, computerized and special, and clinical test sites and ensuring that contracts for all sites are complete, signed, and current. DANB will not administer exams at test sites without signed and complete site contracts on file. See Appendix G for current contract language."

### **III. CERTIFICANT ISSUES**

#### **A. Renewal Fees to Increase**

The DANB Board approved a \$10 renewal fee increase for Certificants (bringing it to \$55 for one DANB Certification). This increase will become effective January 1, 2007. This increase will be the first since January 2004 and reflects increases in the cost of doing business, including a planned increase in fees assessed by DANB's computerized test vendor, also effective January 2007.

#### **B. Recertification Guidelines Updated**

The Board developed a statement of the rationale behind DANB's requirement of annual recertification (per compliance with the National Commission for Certifying Agencies [NCCA]). The Board determined to include the following statement in all related and relevant DANB's publications, including the 2006 Recertification Guidelines:

*"DANB recognizes the dynamic and emerging roles of Certified Assistants in providing quality care to patients in a dental setting. DANB assists Certified Dental Assistants (CDAs), Certified Orthodontic Assistants (COAs), Certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Assistants (COMSAs), and Certified Dental Practice Management Administrators (CDPMAs) in meeting these ever-changing roles by requiring Continuing Dental Education (CDE) hours. DANB requires a minimum of 12 CDE hours annually, which reflects the requirements of most states that have mandatory CDE requirements for dental assistants. The yearly CDE requirement enhances the continued competence of Certified Assistants. Requiring yearly CDE hours emphasizes the importance of lifelong professional learning and development. DANB's credentials are known in the dental community as a Mark of Dental Assisting Excellence. This measure of excellence can be maintained only if each Certificant is able to demonstrate competence."*

The Board also voted to add the following language to CDE Category 7 of DANB's Recertification Guidelines: 'Successful completion of non-DANB dental-related professionally developed and proctored exams (consisting of at least 100 questions) will be awarded hour-for-hour credit, for the amount of time designated for the completion of the exam.'

### **C. DANB Mission Statement Revised**

The Board approved the following revision to DANB Bylaws and Board Governance Document, Article II, adding the six “ends” noted as bullets below. DANB’s mission statement will read as follows:

DANB is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to promote the public good by providing credentialing services to the dental community.

DANB accomplishes and measures the success of this mission through:

- § A properly governed, financially secure, administratively sound organization;
- § Valid dental assisting examinations;
- § Dental assisting recertification process integrity;
- § Visible, valuable, and accessible DANB credentials;
- § Testing services for groups within the oral healthcare community;
- § Information services for the oral healthcare community related to dental assisting credentialing and recertification.

### **D. Election of Officers of the DANB Board of Directors for FY 2005-06**

The DANB Board elected the following new officers to serve during FY 2005-06: Judith Andrews, CDA, RDA, EFDA, FADAA, Chair; Carla Schneider, CDA, RDA, Vice-Chair; and Brenda Fell, CDA, CDPMA, Secretary.

### **E. Dates of Upcoming DANB Board Meetings**

The DANB Board of Directors will hold its Winter Meeting February 10-11, 2006, and its Annual Meeting August 25-27, 2006.

### **Distribution List**

American Dental Association (Dr. David Preble, Director, Dental Education; Sherin Took, Commission on Dental Accreditation; Karen Hart and Diane Boehm, Council on Dental Education and Licensure)  
American Dental Assistants Association (Larry Sepin, Executive Director; Debra Von Alman, CDA, President)  
American Association of Dental Examiners (Molly Nadler, Executive Director)  
American Dental Education Association (Richard Valachovic, DMD, Executive Director; Associate Executive Director)  
Academy of General Dentistry (Christie A. Tarantino, CAE, Interim Executive Director)  
American Association of Orthodontists (Thomas Watters, Executive Director)  
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (Robert Rinaldi, PhD, Executive Director)  
Executive Directors or Administrators, State Boards of Dentistry