



National Commission on Recognition of Dental Specialty and Certifying Boards (NCRDSCB)

The NCRDSCB is an entity of the American Dental Association (ADA) that has sole responsibility and authority to recognize dental specialties and their respective certifying boards based on compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*.¹ In October 2017, the ADA House of Delegates voted to establish the National Commission to reduce potential or perceived bias or conflict of interest in the decision-making process for recognizing dental specialties. With the establishment of the NCRDSCB, the ADA gave full responsibility of recognizing dental specialties and their respective certifying boards to the National Commission.

The mission of the NCRDSCB is that it serves the public and profession by providing transparent and objective review of the recognized specialty organizations, prospective specialty organizations, their respective certifying boards and their adherence to the *Requirements for Recognition*. In order to become and maintain specialty status, the discipline must be a distinct and well-defined field, which requires unique knowledge and skills beyond those commonly possessed by dental school graduates as well as be separate and distinct from the knowledge and skills required to practice in any other recognized dental specialty. As part of the *Requirements for Recognition*, a newly recognized specialty sponsoring organization must have the ability to establish a national board for certifying diplomates.

The NCRDSCB is funded 50% by the ADA and 50% by the dental specialty sponsoring organizations. The dental specialty sponsoring organizations annual contribution is equally divided among the organizations. The composition of the NCRDSCB's Board of Commissioners consists of an equal number of general dentists and specialty members with one (1) public member. Each of the recognized specialty sponsoring organizations appoint a Commissioner and the ADA Board of Trustees appoints the general dentist Commissioners.

The NCRDSCB is an independent body of the ADA and has sole responsibility in vetting and reviewing applications for specialty recognition based on compliance with the *Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists*. After a thorough analysis of the application for recognition and comments submitted by the Communities of Interest, the appropriate Review Committee makes a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to either grant or deny recognition. The recognition process for the sponsoring organization and its respective certifying board is the same except for differences in the *Requirements for Recognition*. Approval of a new specialty creates two (2) immediate vacancies on the Board of Commissioners, one (1) for the new specialty and one (1) for a general dentist due to the equal number of specialties and general dentists as outlined in the National Commissions *Rules*.

The officers of the NCRDSCB are a Chair, Vice-chair and Director. The Chair and Vice-chair of the National Commission shall be elected annually by the Board of Commissioners. The Vice-chair of the National Commission shall become Chair at the end of his or her term as Vice-chair. If the Vice-chair is unable or unwilling to serve as Chair, then the Chair shall be elected by the Board of Commissioners during its regular, annual meeting. The office of Vice-chair shall be held by a general dentist when the Chair is a specialist, and by a specialist when the Chair is a general dentist. The Commissioners serve one four-year term which also includes being Chair and Vice Chair if elected. The NCRDSCB has two (2) Review Committees that are dedicated to the addressing recognition matters for the National Commission. One (1) Review Committee focuses on recognition of the dental specialty sponsoring organizations and the other focuses on recognition of the certifying boards.

The NCRDSCB also has an Appeal Board that is independent of the Board of the Commissioners that has the authority to decide appeals filed by a sponsoring organization or certifying board based on adverse actions taken by the Board of Commissioners such as denying or revoking recognition. The Appeal Board has the ability to affirm the decision of the Board of Commissioners or remand the issue back to the Board of Commissioners for reconsideration.

In summary, the ADA recognizes the National Commission as the sole authority in specialty recognition.



The Commission and its Standing Committees hold numerous virtual meetings throughout the year and hold an annual in-person meeting where all Commissioners are in attendance to take action on all of the Commissions business that has occurred throughout the year.

It is the position of the American College of Prosthodontist to support the National Commission on Dental Specialty Recognition and Certifying Boards in its role in granting specialty status and approving emerging specialties and subspecialties

References

1. American Dental Association (ADA). NCRDSCB Requirements for Recognition of Dental Specialties and National Certifying Boards for Dental Specialists. Available at:
<https://www.ada.org/~media/NCRDSCB/Files/requirements.pdf?la=en>

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