



### WHO WE ARE

The Coalition for Modernizing Dental Licensure (CMDL) was founded in October of 2018 by the American Dental Association (ADA), the American Dental Education Association (ADEA), and the American Student Dental Association (ASDA).

### OUR MISSION

The mission of the Coalition for Modernizing Dental Licensure (CMDL) is to ensure **patient safety**, increase **access to care**, and promote **professional mobility** by modernizing the dental licensure process.

### OUR GOALS

1. Achieve adoption of valid and reliable examinations for dental licensure that do not involve the use of single encounter, procedure-based examinations on patients.
2. Achieve portability of dental licensure among all licensing jurisdictions in the United States for the benefit of the public and the profession.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Who can join the Coalition?**  
*Organizations, agencies and dental schools supportive of licensure reform are invited to join the Coalition as Members or Supporters. Interested parties are encouraged to visit our website, [dentallicensure.org](http://dentallicensure.org), for more information.*
- **What is the difference between a Coalition Member and Coalition Supporter?**  
*Coalition Members advance the Coalition's goals by informing the development of the Coalition strategy; engage in learning, best practice exchange, and information sharing; participate in national, state, and local advocacy efforts; and utilize the Coalition's tools and resources in their own work. Members agree to appoint a representative to the Coalition, attend the Coalition's annual meeting, keep the Coalition informed of the organization's related activities, and share relevant information with organization members through listservs, websites and newsletters. Coalition Supporters are committed to the goals of the Coalition, and are willing to lend their names to the effort. They have access to the Coalition's tools and resources and may participate in national, state, and local Coalition activities, as appropriate. Supporters agree to keep the Coalition informed of the organization's related activities, and share relevant information with organization members through listservs, websites and newsletters.*
- **How does my organization join the Coalition?**  
*Applications to join the Coalition are posted on the website, [dentallicensure.org](http://dentallicensure.org). Once a complete application has been submitted, it will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and within three weeks the organization or agency will receive a notification via email.*
- **Is there a financial commitment to join the Coalition?**  
*There are no dues for Coalition Members or Supporters. However, member and supporter organizations are responsible for covering travel costs for their own representatives to Coalition meetings.*
- **What steps will the Coalition take in the coming months?**  
*The Executive Committee is reviewing applications and welcoming new Members and Supporters to the Coalition. Toolkits for Coalition members to use as they advocate for licensure change in their states are available upon request. Meetings of stakeholders and change-makers in states ready for licensure reform are underway.*



- **Will the CMDL engage in licensure reform discussions at the state level without the support of the state dental society and/or the dental schools?**

*The Coalition will not engage in efforts to reform licensure without the support of the state dental society and dental school(s) in that state.*

- **Are there any states that already accept alternative methods for determining whether a licensure candidate is clinically competent?**

*Yes! Minnesota, Colorado, and Washington accept a non-patient based exam known as the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) administered by the National Dental Examining Board (NDEB) of Canada; Oregon has signed legislation changing their statute to allow the Board of Dentistry to accept this type of examination. Other states, like New York, Ohio, Connecticut and California accept completion of a PGY1 residency or portfolio review as a pathway to initial licensure. The Coalition is developing criteria to identify potential states with supportive dental associations, dental boards and dental schools that may be amenable to change.*

- **Where does dental hygiene fit into the Coalition and its work?**

*The dental hygiene community faces many of the same challenges in their licensing process; the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) is a member of the Coalition. We are very pleased to see ADHA's policy statement on the elimination of the single encounter, procedure-based patient examination adopted by its House of Delegates in 2018.*

- **Has the examining community, including regional testing agencies or dental examiners, been involved in this process? What do they think about this?**

*The American Association of Dental Boards (AADB) and the regional testing agencies were involved in the early discussions leading up to the creation of the Coalition. While we all share a commitment to protecting patient safety and ensuring a well-prepared workforce, we were not aligned on the design of the exam – specifically eliminating the single encounter, procedure-based patient examinations and replacing them with clinical assessments that have stronger validity and reliability evidence. We have continued discussions and made presentations at AADB's meetings, and hope that the examining community will choose to join us in modernizing the dental licensure process.*

- **If the ADEX exam is accepted for initial licensure by almost all states, why not just use that as a way to achieve uniform initial licensure?**

*There are many reasons why the ADEX exam is not the solution. Single encounter, procedure-based examinations on patients, like the ADEX exam, have many problems. First and foremost, there are the ethical issues of using patients in high stakes tests, such as how patients are recruited, how and if they are fully informed, the fact that irreversible procedures are being performed, and the lack of follow-up care after that single encounter. We also know that these types of examinations are not very reliable at identifying stronger from weaker candidates; we use the terms Validity and Reliability for this, and we know that other methods of assessment have greater rigor and strength. In addition, examinations like ADEX only address a small part of the large set of comprehensive skills and knowledge that are required of a practice-ready dentist. The exam is also prone to random error, out of the control of a qualified candidate that can result in a failure. There are other issues as well including operational concerns and the high cost of the exam. For all these reasons, the current licensure landscape has to change.*