

Unofficial Report of Major Actions
Psychometric Research & Examination
Content Development Meeting of the
Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations

April 25, 2025

The Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE) met on Friday, April 25, 2025 for its annual Psychometric Research & Examination Content Development meeting and took the following actions:

1. Approved the following changes to the test specifications for the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination (NBDHE), with implementation of the changes to occur in the 4th quarter of 2026:
 - Decreased the percentage of NBDHE questions assessing *Scientific Basis for Dental Hygiene Practice*, from 17% to 16%.
 - Increased the percentage of questions assessing *Provision of Clinical Dental Hygiene Services*, from 76% to 78%. The NBDHE will continue to include 150 case-based questions in this area.
 - Decreased the percentage of questions assessing *Research Principles and Community Health*, from 7% to 6%.
 - Updated some topic names and labels, to help clarify information for candidates.

The changes to the NBDHE test specifications were informed by a recommendation from a Test Specifications Review Panel convened by the JCNDE in 2024. In forming its recommendation the Panel considered the results of the Joint Commission's 2024 Dental Hygiene Practice Analysis, which provided detailed, up-to-date information about the tasks early career dental hygienists perform, the settings in which they practice, and the characteristics of the patients they treat.

The JCNDE believes the changes to the NBDHE test specifications are unlikely to require changes in how candidates prepare for the NBDHE, nor are they likely to require changes to program curriculum.

2. Established a new performance standard for the NBDHE, with implementation of the new standard to coincide with the implementation of the new NBDHE test specifications in the 4th quarter of 2026. The new performance standard was identified through a structured and rigorous process involving a standard setting review panel composed of a diverse and representative group of subject matter experts who thoroughly scrutinized NBDHE content to identify the level of performance required for safe practice.

The NBDHE is a valid, reliable, and fair examination that is used to help inform licensure decisions that help protect the safety of the public. Candidates are encouraged to be well-prepared before attempting this rigorous examination.

3. Reviewed and refined strategic roadmaps for the dental and dental hygiene examination programs of the JCNDE, to help ensure continued innovation and advancement.

The strategic roadmap for the dental examination programs involves the following activities:

- a. Conducting a dental practice analysis in 2026, to inform future updates to the examination content domains for the Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE) and Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE).

- b. Considering potential implementation of multi-stage adaptive testing for the INBDE as a means of shortening the examination and increasing test security, while still maintaining strong psychometric properties.
- c. Convening panels of subject matter experts in 2026 to consider the results of the dental practice analysis and recommend corresponding updates to the INBDE and DLOSCE test specifications.
- d. Convening panels of subject matter experts in 2027 to recommend new performance standards for the INBDE and DLOSCE, factoring in any updates to the test specifications.

The strategic roadmap for the dental hygiene examination programs involves the following activities:

- a. Continuing to familiarize communities of interest with the Dental Hygiene Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DHLOSCE) through webinars and other outreach efforts in 2025, including the release of sample DHLOSCE questions.
 - b. Launching the DHLOSCE in the 4th quarter of 2025, and subsequently convening a panel of subject matter experts to recommend a performance standard for the examination.
 - c. Implementing three-parameter logistic (3PL) model scoring for the NBDHE in 2026, concurrent with the implementation of the updated NBDHE test specifications and the updated NBDHE performance standard noted previously in this report. 3PL scoring will provide a more accurate and precise estimate of a candidate's skill level, thereby further improving the quality of information available to dental and dental hygiene boards as they make licensure decisions.
 - d. Implementing multi-stage adaptive testing for the NBDHE no sooner than 2028. The introduction of multi-stage adaptive testing will shorten the NBDHE and further enhance test security, without sacrificing the precision of NBDHE results.
- 5. Appointed new JCNDE Test Constructors and reappointed currently serving Test Constructors in support of the examination programs of the JCNDE. The JCNDE expressed its heartfelt thanks to Test Constructors for their exceptional work. The Joint Commission's examinations would not be possible without these exceptional individuals who work incredibly hard in service to their profession and the public.
 - 6. Sunset the DHLOSCE Steering Committee in recognition of the fact that it had successfully fulfilled its charge. The JCNDE adopted a resolution thanking the members of the Steering Committee for their hard work, dedication, and significant contributions to the development of the DHLOSCE.
 - 7. Further strengthened the examinations of the JCNDE from a fairness perspective, by adopting recommendations from the Fairness and Sensitivity Reviewers regarding the presentation of patient information on the National Board Examinations. The implementation of these recommendations will further strengthen the procedures and guidelines already in place to help ensure the fairness of National Board Examination content.
 - 8. Adopted a resolution permitting the American Dental Association's (ADA's) Department of Testing Services (DTS) to publish information concerning the statistical relationships between scores from the examinations of the JCNDE and other examinations implemented by DTS, doing so in accordance with corresponding examination program privacy policies, and in a manner that is consistent with the mission and vision of the JCNDE.
 - 9. Approved the following technical reports used to monitor and report on the quality and

performance of the National Board Examinations:

- a. INBDE Technical Report
- b. DLOSCE Technical Report
- c. NBDHE Technical Report

10. Addressed administrative matters, including approval of prior meeting minutes and future meeting dates. The next meeting of the JCNDE will be the annual Governance, Policies, & Administration meeting on June 25, 2025. The next annual State Dental Board Forum will occur on August 18, 2025.

Dr. Peter M. Loomer (ADEA) Chair
Dr. M. Reza Iranmanesh (ADA) Vice-chair
Dr. Alberto Gasparoni (ADEA)
Dr. Sara Gordon (ADEA)
Tami Grzesikowski (ADHA)
Dr. A.R. Hendricksen (AADB)
Betty Kabel (ADHA)
Dr. Julie W. McKee (AADB)
Dr. Julia K. Mikell (AADB)
Dr. Jeetendra Patel (AADB)
Tareina Rogers (ASDA)
Dr. Frank E. Schiano (ADA)
Dr. James R. Sherrard (Public Member)
Dr. Ronald Waryjas (ADA)

Dr. Manish Chopra, ADA Board Liaison
Michelle Chiang, ASDA Student Observer