

# The CRDTS Report

Over 50 Years of Testing Excellence

Central Regional Dental Testing Service, Inc.

Winter 2024

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Otto Dohm, DDS  
President

## CRDTS 2024

This is often the time for reflection upon the past and anticipation for the future. It is important to reflect on the past and assess the effectiveness of our efforts and make mid-course corrections as necessary. I would like to take this opportunity to

thank everyone involved with this organization for their dedication and efforts to a common cause. It is remarkable to see a group of people with common goals and values work so hard as a team and it is a tribute to the foundation that this organization was built upon and the adherence to those guiding principles. It seems that many today question whether hard work and principles are traits that matter in our society; I think it is clear that these things do matter, and the evidence is obvious within this organization.

CRDTS as an organization continues to develop and provide testing services to state boards across the country. The organization continues to grow in membership each year. The development of our exams provides reliable, valid mechanisms that State Boards can rely upon to evaluate the competency of potential professional licensees within their jurisdiction. The development of these exams is an ongoing process that allows CRDTS to modify and adjust the content to keep pace with a changing profession while ensuring the validity

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of the exam process. The fact that CRDTS is governed by a committee made up of representatives of State Boards ensures that the needs of the states are met and allows for input into the exam process by the ultimate end user of the product, this is something unique in this industry. We are able to develop this product to meet the needs of the boards while doing everything possible to make the exam process less onerous for the candidates that must take these exams. The effort to accommodate the candidate and reduce the stress of a high stakes exam is evident by on-site retakes and the options of testing center exams at varied dates that a candidate may choose. I think that by any evaluation CRDTS has the premier set of exams from the State Board perspective as well as the candidate's and has done remarkably well accounting for both sides.

*Otto Dohm, DDS*  
President



Sheli Cobler,  
Executive Director

## DENTAL AND DENTAL HYGIENE COMPACTS – WHAT IS IN THE fine print... And WHAT IS THE IMPACT on Dentistry?

There is so much to know and so many questions that arise when reading through the proposed dental and dental hygiene compacts that unfortunately, it is impossible to unpack it all in one small article. Thus, this article will highlight just a few things to consider.

The impact the compacts, as written, could have on the dental profession creates concern for CRDTS as an agency that has been providing excellence in dental and dental hygiene testing for more than half a century, and for many of our Members. There is no doubt that portability for dental professionals is desired and important. There is no doubt that with the right language dental and dental hygiene compacts could enhance portability options for dental professionals.

However, if not carefully written the dental and dental hygiene interstate compacts may negatively impact the standard of care established by states. While portability is important, the mission of state dental boards is to protect the safety and welfare of the public. If state dental boards cannot enforce the requirements for dental and dental hygiene licensure in their respective states, the quality of dentistry may be at risk. Furthermore, with some minor tweaks, the matter of portability can be improved with the licensure through credentialing laws that are already in place in 49 of the 50 U.S. states. A compact will only complicate the matter further.

For example, 43 of the 50 states that accept clinical licensure examinations as a pathway toward licensure require a psychomotor hand skills component by law or rule. These laws were put into place to protect the safety and welfare of the public. With the Council on State Governments (CSG) Dental and Dental Hygiene (DDH) Compact, participating states must “Require for licensure that applicants successfully complete a Clinical Assessment” (Section 3, A. 10. DDH Compact). Great. However, Clinical Assessment is defined as, “an examination or process required for licensure as a Dentist or Dental Hygienist as applicable that provides evidence of clinical competence in dentistry or dental hygiene.” (Section 2. D. DDH Compact). There is no requirement that the assessment include a hand skills component.

Only six states currently accept the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE) which is a computer based **written-only** examination with **no hand skills assessment** developed by the American Dental Association (ADA)/Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE). This means that if a licensee from a state that does not require a hand skills assessment participates in the compact and requests privilege in a state that **does** require a hand skills assessment, the participating state must grant that privilege and **does not have the authority to require a hand skills assessment** before that licensee practices in the respective state. If the overwhelming majority of state’s have included the requirement for a hand skills assessment for licensure in their laws, it would seem not only appropriate but absolutely necessary that the state legislators look to the state dental boards for guidance about the effect this compact language may have on the standards set forth in a respective state’s laws. Unfortunately, in many cases the dental boards are not being consulted and bills introducing the legislation are moving forward this very legislative session.

The CSG partnered with the Department of Defense, the American Dental Association (ADA), and the American Dental Hygienist’s Association (ADHA) to write the compact language and in January of 2023, before most dental professionals or even members of state dental boards knew anything about the proposed compact, the compact was lobbied and was enacted into three states. It continues to be heavily lobbied and is being introduced into legislation in the 2024 legislative session in ten or more states. In order to come into effect, the CSG DDH Compact must be enacted into law in seven states.

It is concerning that laws may be passed that impact the dental profession without the input of the very professionals charged with enforcing those laws. Some state dental board members are learning about the language of the compacts AFTER the legislation has been introduced or even adopted. How is it that state dental boards, those bodies that must enforce the laws that protect the public, are not the first to be asked for a position on legislation that will impact their responsibility and authority?

Proposed as an alternative to the CSG DDH Compact, is the AADB Dental and Dental Hygiene Compact (AADB Compact). The AADB compact was discussed at the most recent AADB Annual Meeting. Authors of the compact were noted to be employees of the CDCA/WREB/CITA testing organization and a couple of board attorneys from states that accept only the ADEX examination which is administered solely by CDCA/WREB/CITA. The AADB Compact requires that participants in the compact have successfully completed the ADEX exam. Those having completed a different clinical examination may be grandfathered in if taken prior to January 2024. Currently, 41 of the 50 states in the U.S. accept more than one clinical licensure examination,

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**DENTAL AND DENTAL HYGIENE COMPACTS – WHAT IS IN THE fine print... Continued...**

thus a very small minority of states will be able to enter such a compact without having their current laws and rules impacted. Portability and an easier method of licensure is said to be the main idea behind the compacts. However, if that were the case, it seems counter-productive to ask the majority of the U.S. to ignore their own state's laws in favor of one testing agency. A monopoly, I'm sure we can agree, is a dangerous thing. Competition is what drives higher standards, accountability, and cost control. Certainly, there is a better solution to enhanced opportunities for portability among dentists and dental hygienists than the compromise of laws that are already in place for the purpose of public safety.

CRDTS has been providing a standard of excellence in dental and dental hygiene testing since 1968. The leadership of the organization consists of a group of dental and business professionals who are passionate about the dental profession and believe that licensure examinations are critical in ensuring competency for new dental and dental

hygiene graduates. I've heard it said by many examiners that before they became examiners they didn't know if the clinical licensure exams were beneficial but after examining and seeing the 1-3% of students that are not quite ready to practice, they too became passionate about the importance of the exams as a means of assessing minimal competency for the benefit of protecting the safety of the public.

As an agency that has no financial interest in either of the currently proposed dental and dental hygiene compacts, the goal is to help raise awareness of details in the language of the proposed compacts. Our mission is to serve and assist licensing boards with their mission to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Whether you are a dentist or dental hygienist, board member or educator, it is important that you know the impact a compact could have on the dental profession.

*Sheli Cobler*  
CRDTS Executive Director



*Deena Kuempel, DDS*  
President Elect

## CRDTS - ALWAYS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO HELP STATE BOARDS AND PRACTITIONERS

Hello from balmy Iowa.  
Christmas and New Year have

passed and there is NO SNOW on the ground. Just like our environment, CRDTS is ever changing. Many of you may think of CRDTS as only a dental testing resource. We are working diligently at this time to help state boards by developing and supplying resources for needed remediation of licensed individuals and licensees that may have been away from practice for some time and wish to update their clinical skills prior to their return to practice.

We are doing this with a significant investment in leading haptic technology and partnerships with other outstanding businesses to assure assessment and assistance in clinical hand skills and management issues (record keeping, standard of care concerns) practitioners may face and need remediation with for state boards to assure public safety.

We are doing this for the benefit of both practitioners and state boards. A definite effort is being made to keep fees at a level so that it is not prohibitive to consider for the practitioner to update and prove competency in their skills. Another service this can provide for states is the ability to assure that foreign trained practitioners are at the same level as CODA approved program graduates.

Just as we have made changes going to manikin-based exams, we are being forward thinking about using haptic technology in licensure testing. This technology is being used more every year at universities in their clinical training, so using it for licensure testing will be consistent with their educational experiences. This may also allow for a standard of acceptability to be programmed and the clinician's work to be scanned into the program to be evaluated electronically.

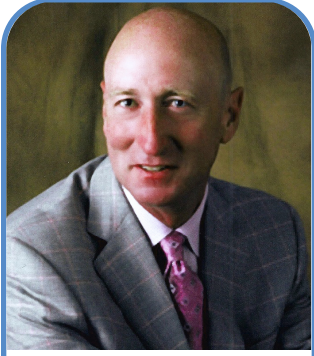
Needless to say, none of this happens without the dedication and commitment of the many committee members and staff members. We hear you when you have needs, and we are here to help find the best solutions and serve you with the kind of teamwork that you deserve.

Thank you again for being a part of CRDTS and we are here to help you anyway that we can.

*Deena Kuempel, DDS*  
President Elect



## DENTAL NEWS



*Mark Edwards, DDS,  
Director of Dental  
Examinations*



*Rod Hill, DDS,  
ERC Committee Chair*

Here's hoping that your 2024 year is off to a prosperous start. CRDTS Dental ERC has been busy continuing to modify simulated patient examination typodonts as well as simulated patient content, criteria, and policy. Following careful psychometric review and analysis of simulated patient examination scoring and candidate performance statistics from 2019-2023, Dr. Brett Foley from Alpine Testing Solutions has supported a modification to the scoring system of the dental examination. Beginning in the 2023-2024 dental testing year (Class of 2024), candidates will be scored in a conjunctive manner, meaning they will have to achieve a 75% or greater score on each procedure within each part of the CRDTS exam in order to pass the overall exam.

In collaboration with Acidental, additional teeth with simulated caries have been developed, and a new periodontal typodont will be evaluated for implementation in the Class of 2025 testing cycle. Additionally, CRDTS is being financially and environmentally prudent in the recycling of typodonts, which is an effort to reduce the net cost to candidates taking the CRDTS exam.

CRDTS continues to embrace and explore new avenues and the impact of technology in dental and dental hygiene licensure assessment, education, and remediation. CRDTS continues to work in a collaborative relationship with SIM-toCARE to develop and refine virtual haptic technology to be used in education and remediation at our independent testing site in Topeka, KS. Additionally, CRDTS maintains a partnership agreement with Acidental relative to utilizing Teo virtual reality technology as a remediation tool for distance learning via 3-D evaluation and critique of licensee work.

CRDTS dental leadership will attend the 2024 Southern Deans and Dental Examiners Annual Conference in Charleston, SC on January 19-21, and will be an exhibitor at the American Student Dental Association (ASDA) meeting in Denver, CO on February 23-25, and the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) meeting in New Orleans, LA on March 9-12. These events provide excellent opportunities to share the CRDTS vision and mission with both students and educators as we continue to spread the word on services that CRDTS can offer in dental examination for initial licensure as well as in remediation/retraining and reeducation.

Again, the Dental leadership team is open to your thoughts and ideas on how we can most effectively serve the parties who we represent. From state dental boards in their mission to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, to dental candidates and dental schools, CRDTS continues to develop and implement fair, valid and reliable scoring criteria and examination policy.

*Mark Edwards, DDS*  
Director of Dental Examinations

*Rod Hill, DDS*  
ERC Committee Chair

## FRESH OFF THE PRESS FROM THE DENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Season's greetings!

CRDTS' 2024 exam year is looking bright! Please take time to visit [crdts.org](http://crdts.org) and view our 2024 manuals and orientations. We are excited to develop new relationships and continue to foster our existing ones with our scheduled Dental Hygiene Programs. As many of you have already experienced, CRDTS is all about the personal touch. We are known for our friendliness and our timely responses to your questions. We are here for you - students, faculty, and state boards - to answer any questions that may arise about the exam or scheduling. CRDTS will work with you to meet your testing needs.

You may have heard that California Governor Newsom signed AB1257 late last year and it goes into effect January

2024. One of the provisions of this bill is that the students graduate from a CODA accredited California dental hygiene program and apply for their license within three years of graduating. CRDTS will continue to test in California to meet the portability needs of candidates who may be going to other states. Currently, all states (except California) require applicants for initial dental hygiene licensure to pass a clinical licensure examination.

We have many student Q&A sessions scheduled for 2024 programs. Let us know if you would like one scheduled for your program and we will make it happen. CRDTS has a lot to offer and this is why our exam is highly popular and continues to grow.

Thank you for your dedication to our profession and your loyalty to CRDTS.

Kind Regards,

*Kelly Mandella, RDH*  
Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations

*Trelawny Saldana, RDH*  
Assistant Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations

*Janine Sasse-Englert, RDH*  
Dental Hygiene Exam Review Committee Chair

## WHAT 0 TO 60 MEANS TO THE CRDTS CARE PROGRAM

Have you ever been in a fast car? I mean a REALLY fast car. You know, the kind that can go from 0 to 60 in just a couple of seconds. If you have, you know the exhilarating feeling of starting from a dead stop, and in moments, you are speeding down the road.

It was mid-2022 when the first whispers of a new CRDTS remediation/reeducation program were spoken and the idea of creating a new arm of the organization that focused on working with State Dental Boards to create custom remediation solutions for Licensees was brand new. CRDTS recognized the need and understood the organization has the expertise to create a program, and the board supported the initiative to develop a program to assist the State Dental Boards in this way. Thus, the leadership and Subject Matter Experts diligently worked to develop an option for remediation that State Dental Boards could utilize and licensees could take advantage of for individual needs. Today, only sixteen months after the first ideas were put down on paper, CRDTS is quickly becoming known as the premier organization for remediation and reeducation programs

for dentists and dental hygienists. For those involved in the conception, creation, and administration of the CARE Programs, I cannot think of a better analogy than to say this program has gone from 0 to 60, and we couldn't be happier to be in the driver's seat for this exciting journey.

During the August CRDTS Annual Meeting, I had the opportunity to talk with many of my examiner colleagues and realized that although CRDTS has been immersed in this new adventure, many of you have heard only bits and pieces of what we are doing, and others were completely unaware of these programs. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of the exciting things we have been doing with CRDTS CARE.

### Why would CRDTS get involved with remediation?

CRDTS has worked very hard over the last 50+ years of dental testing to build relationships with State Dental Boards. During conversations with leaders from State Boards, we realized that they were searching for a reliable, trusted partner that could provide dental and dental hygiene education for their Licensees needing to prove competence in dental and dental hygiene practice. Who better to create learning opportunities for these individuals, than an organization with an abundance of highly skilled clinicians, and educational leaders?

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## What 0 to 60 means to the CRDTS CARE Program Continued...

### Who does CRDTS CARE Programs help?

CRDTS currently has two categories of individuals to whom we provide education; Licensees who have been board-ordered to complete an education program to maintain their license and Licensees who are looking to reinstate a lapsed license. Every situation is unique, so the CRDTS CARE Team creates custom programming that takes into consideration the needs of each licensee.

### Where does CRDTS hold the Remediation and Reeducation Programs?

In 2022, CRDTS opened our Learning Center/Clinic right in the same building as CRDTS Central Office. This space currently has four operatories and is equipped with everything clinicians need for their customized, one-on-one, hands-on skills practice. Along with these operatories, Licensees get hands-on practice using our very own SIMtoCARE Dente, virtual haptic technology. CRDTS is proud to partner with SIMtoCARE to develop virtual haptic technology that enhances education. Having the opportunity to work with a hygiene reeducation case in this environment, I was thrilled with the private, stress-free, and comfortable atmosphere this space provides the licensee to work and learn, and the feedback from licensees has been very positive.

### How does CRDTS provide "Custom Remediation and Re-Education Programs"?

One of my favorite job responsibilities is to work directly with each licensee to understand their situation and help them navigate the path to licensure. For some, the need for remediation is due to a state's board order requiring them to complete a program of didactic and hands-on skills practice. For these individuals, we work directly with the dental board to create customized education that will address the areas of deficiency. Many of the dental hygiene Licensees reach out to CRDTS because life has led them away from the practice of dental hygiene and they are looking to reinstate a lapsed license. Many state dental boards require these hygienists to complete a dental hygiene reeducation program, and others require successful completion of the CRDTS dental hygiene examination. In a time when many states are experiencing a dental hygiene shortage, it is excit-

ing to see so many hygienists returning to practice, and even more exciting to be a part of their re-licensure journey.

### What happens after the 0 to 60?

It has been a whirlwind getting to this point of our new CARE Remediation and Reeducation Programs. However, CRDTS has no intention of slowing down. To stay with our analogy, we have our foot firmly on the gas, and are moving down the road of solidifying our reputation as the go-to organization for remediation and reeducation programs for dental professionals. We are accomplishing this by staying in front of State Dental Boards, presenting information on our CARE programs to the individuals tasked with ensuring the safety of our dental patients. We continue to build our learning library and are working with our Subject Matter Experts to ensure that we are not only helping Licensees complete necessary requirements, but also continue the relationship to ensure that the refreshed concepts, skills, and procedures are put into daily practice. We are proud to partner with SIMtoCARE continuing to develop technology driven education, which we have found to be a great way to provide repetitive learning opportunities in both dentistry and dental hygiene. We continue to nurture our relationship with SPEAR Education and EBAS, to allow for robust learning opportunities and the ability to provide the ethics testing that state boards are mandating for Licensees. Finally, the CRDTS CARE Team is working to build additional programming that will help further meet the requests of our Dental State Boards, and the needs of our Licensees.

We invite you to join us on this CARE Programs "road trip" by helping to spread the word about these exciting new offerings. As examiners, educators, and state dental board members, we all have opportunities to inform Key Opinion Leaders and decision makers that CRDTS provides both fair, trusted and reliable examinations for future dental professions AND remediation and reeducation programs for Licensees across the country.

*Catrice Opichka, RDH*  
RDH Programs Coordinator

## CRDTS ANNUAL MEETING

August 23rd - 24th, 2024

Intercontinental Hotel Kansas City at the Plaza

Save  
The Date

Over 50 Years of Testing Excellence