



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY  
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD  
FALLS CHURCH VA 22042

BUMEDINST 1520.37D  
BUMED-N01C  
21 May 2026

BUMED INSTRUCTION 1520.37D

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Subj: NAVY DENTAL OFFICER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Ref: (a) BUMEDINST 1520.41A

Encl: (1) Sample Navy Dental Officer Education Program Change Proposal

1. Purpose. This instruction assigns responsibility to review change proposals for the Dental Officer Education Program to the Navy Dental Officer Professional Education Council (DOPEC) for the purpose of providing recommendations to the Chief of the Navy Dental Corps, who has responsibility for program oversight and development, per reference (a) and enclosure (1). This instruction is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. BUMEDINST 1520.37C.

3. Scope and Applicability. Applies to ships and stations having dental personnel.

4. Background

a. The Secretary of the Navy and senior Navy line leadership have consistently supported the Surgeon General of the Navy's, and Chief, Navy Dental Corps' belief that strong professional educational programs are required to obtain new knowledge and maintain the skills of our people. To ensure resources are maximized for appropriate, timely, and high-quality Navy dental educational programs, a coordinated policy development, and decision-making process must include students, educators, and resource sponsors.

b. Establishing, maintaining, and applying standards that ensure the quality and continuous improvement of dental education is a primary goal within Navy Medicine. This is achieved through use of accrediting bodies or via self-assessment protocols.

c. The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association has a voluntary, but highly recognized and widely used process of accreditation of advanced specialty programs. The process of accreditation assures students, specialty boards, and the public that accredited programs comply with published community standards. CODA offers accreditation to any institution offering acceptable programs that are recognized by the American Dental Association.

5. Policy

a. The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) policy is that programs training Navy dental residents will meet or exceed CODA accreditation standards. Navy dental residency programs in the listed specialty areas, whether military or civilian, must be accredited by CODA:

(1) Advanced Specialty Education Programs

- (a) Dental Public Health
- (b) Endodontics
- (c) Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- (d) Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- (e) Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology
- (f) Orthodontics
- (g) Pediatric Dentistry
- (h) Periodontics
- (i) Prosthodontics
- (j) Maxillofacial Prosthetics
- (k) Orofacial Pain

(2) Postdoctoral General Dentistry Education Programs

- (a) Advanced Education in General Dentistry
- (b) General Practice Residency
- (c) Comprehensive Dentistry

b. Operative dentistry programs must comply with accreditation standards as set by the American Board of Operative Dentistry.

c. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Fellowships can be CODA accredited or recognized by the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons or the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

d. The Advanced Clinical Program in Exodontia is evaluated and assessed by the specialty leader for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery based on appropriate accreditation guidelines as applicable within the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery specialty.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

a. All roles and responsibilities concerning postgraduate dental education programs are delineated in reference (a).

b. Participants in Navy Dental Officer Education Programs are encouraged to submit proposals for dental education program changes. Proposals outlined in enclosure (1), should be submitted to the Chair, DOPEC at the listed address:

Dean  
Attention: Chair, Dental Officer Professional Education Council  
Naval Postgraduate Dental School  
Naval Medical Leader and Professional Development Command  
8955 Wood Road  
Bethesda, Maryland 20889-5628

7. DOPEC. This council reports to the Chief, Navy Dental Corps and serves as the principal forum for developing changes to policy or guidelines governing Navy dental officer professional education programs. These programs include: Advanced Specialty Education Programs, Postdoctoral General Dentistry Education Programs, Clinical Fellowship Training Programs, or any dental continuing education course, workshop, or program presented for other than local command participants as in-Service training.

a. Permanent Membership

(1) Dean, Naval Postgraduate Dental School, Naval Medical Leader and Professional Development Command, Chair

(2) Head, Graduate Dental Programs, Naval Medical Leader and Professional Development Command (Code 1WPGDC)

(3) Deputy Chief, Dental Corps (BUMED-N01C2)

(4) Head, Dental Corps Assignments (Medical Officer Assignments, Navy Personnel Command)

(5) Dental Corps Career Planner

(6) Chair, Education Resources Department (Naval Postgraduate Dental School-11),  
Recorder

b. Ad Hoc Membership

(1) All BUMED Dental Corps specialty leaders

(2) All dental education program directors

c. Functions

(1) Monitors and coordinates action to implement those aspects of the Dental Corps' strategic plan that address dental officer professional education to maximize resources and ensure appropriateness and quality of all Navy-sponsored courses of instruction.

(2) Initiates, reviews, and evaluates dental officer professional education policy proposals, including all proposals to establish, disestablish, or modify the curriculum or operational conduct of any Navy dental education program.

(3) Coordinates dental education policy proposals with appropriate Naval Medical Readiness and Training Commands and Dental Battalion commanding officers as well as BUMED specialty leaders.

(4) Monitors actions taken to implement approved DOPEC recommendations.

(5) Meets quarterly and forwards minutes of such meetings to BUMED-N01C2.

8. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules found on Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-andInformationManagement/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager or the OPNAV Records Management Program (DNS-16).

9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, Corps Chief's Office (BUMED-N01C) will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure

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applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of War, Secretary of the Navy and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



R. FREEDMAN  
Acting

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the Navy Medicine Web site, <https://www.med.navy.mil/Directives/>

SAMPLE NAVY DENTAL OFFICER EDUCATION PROGRAM CHANGE PROPOSAL

1. Program: [Title}
2. Site: [Location]
3. Point of Contact: [Full Name, telephone number, and e-mail]
4. Date: [DD Mmm YYYY]
5. Proposal: [Short title for this proposal.]
6. Issue: [Why is this recommended as an issue?]
7. Problems: [What are the reasons a change is proposed?]
8. Background: [What is the historical context?]
9. Alternatives Considered: [How could this issue be addressed?] For each, include the positive and negative impacts on:
  - a. Requirements (billets, manpower, funds).
  - b. Service needs.
  - c. Other training programs.
  - d. Current and future trainees.
  - e. Detailing process.
  - f. Accreditation.
  - g. In-Service and out-Service programs.
  - h. Faculty profile requirements.
10. Action Recommended: [Which alternative should be chosen and why?]
11. Implementation Plan: [What is the proposed plan of action and milestones?]

Signature

Enclosure (1)