The Pediatric Dentistry Review Committee meetings of July 9, 2002, and January 7, 2003, dealt with accreditation issues relative to advanced education programs in pediatric dentistry. The Committee considered site visitor evaluation and progress reports of fourteen advanced education programs in pediatric dentistry and forwarded its recommendations regarding their accreditation status to the Commission on Dental Accreditation. Preliminary provisional approval was granted to new programs at Yale-New Haven Children’s Hospital, U. of Mississippi School of Dentistry and Children’s Memorial Hospital in Chicago. (This program’s accreditation was withdrawn for failure to have a board certified program director. That deficiency was resolved and the program reapplied for accreditation.) As of this date we have 65 advanced education programs in pediatric dentistry.

The Committee uses the talent of approximately 16 site visitor consultants in the peer review process of programs undergoing accreditation. New consultants are added each year to replace those whose terms have expired. Calibration of the consultants is critical to the reliability of the process and is currently managed through review of printed material and limited on site experience. In 1999, AAPD, ABPD and CODA jointly sponsored an excellent training session in Chicago that enabled all consultants to improve their skills in interpreting and applying our training standards. At that time, we recommended that such a training session be conducted every five years and we now request that the Board initiate planning for this training to occur in 2004. The Review Committee has the program details and budgetary information from the 1999 meeting and is eager to share that material with the Board to facilitate its planning.

To enhance communication from the Review Committee to AAPD and ABPD, the chair this year included the executive directors of both groups in his distribution of summary notes of each meeting of the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). The E.D.’s then distributed these notes to their respective boards. This practice was well received and its continuation is planned.

The issue of monitoring and, potentially, controlling enrollment in advanced education programs is an issue that CODA is currently struggling with. The specialties of oral and maxillofacial surgery, periodontics and endodontics include language in their training standards that requires programs seeking to increase their enrollments to obtain approval from CODA. Under consideration is action to standardize this policy and require all specialties to comply. The Review Committee has considered this issue on several occasions and discussed it with the program directors at their annual meeting last year. We are unanimously opposed to a uniform monitored enrollment policy because it adds a complicated and time consuming process that directors will have to negotiate to add resident slots. This issue is far from resolved at the Commission level but we are advising the Board of its potential problems for our programs and anticipate
asking your future support in opposition when it is open for public comment. No action is required now.

The Review Committee has asked to participate in the program directors’ annual meeting again this May. As last year, we hope to conduct an open question/answer session. It is our desire to participate, even minimally, in every annual meeting of the program directors in order to facilitate communication and understanding relative to the accreditation process.

Linda Nelson’s term on the Review Committee expires in October of this year. She has provided outstanding wisdom and effort to our work and her contributions will be missed. She was appointed to the committee by the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry, which is responsible for appointing her replacement. Dennis McTigue’s term as Commissioner also expires in October and he will be very ably succeeded by Steve Adair. The chair expresses his appreciation to the Board for its unflinching support of the Review Committee in some rather contentious issues over the past few years.

RECOMMENDATION: Support a comprehensive training program for all pediatric dentistry site visitor consultants, similar to that convened in 1999, to be jointly sponsored by AAPD, ABPD and CODA.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Nelson
Charles Post
Michael Roberts
Indru Punwani
Dennis J. McTigue, Chair