

Advisory Graduate Medical Education Council (AGMEC)
Tuesday, March 11, 2008 --10:00 am
Room 3101, Child Health Institute of NJ, New Brunswick

Voting Members Present:

Thomas Bojko, MD, MS, Chairperson; UMDNJ-Child Health Institute
Emmanuel Ashong, MD, Public Member
Robert Johnson, MD, Interim Dean, UMDNJ-NJMS
Brian Little, MD (via telephone), President, Assoc. of Hospital Directors of Medical Education of NJ
Ronald Lockman (via telephone), Public Member
Rick Scott, MD, President of the Medical Society of NJ

Non-Voting Members Present:

Cynthia Kirchner (via telephone), NJ Dept. of Health & Senior Services
Sindy Paul, MD (via telephone), President of the State Board of Medical Examiners
Stanley Schiff, DO (via telephone) Commissioner of Human Services designee

Voting Members Absent/Excused:

Elliott L. Ames, DO, President of the NJ Assoc. of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons
Gary Carter, New Jersey Hospital Association
Dr. John W. Sensakovic for Dr. Brian Shulman, Seton Hall University School of Graduate Medical Education

Staff Members Present:

Peter Falk, UMDNJ
Carol Socha, UMDNJ
John Franzini, Esq., Deputy Attorney General
Marguerite Beardsley, Commission on Higher Education

Guests Approved for Comment:

Lawrence A. Feldman, PhD, UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School
Marisa Freschi, DO, Student enrolled in graduate medical training program
Mark Fussa, Infectious Disease Fellow (via telephone)
Arthur Maron, MD, Saba University
Rubina Raza, MD, UMDNJ-RWJMS
Marie Trontell, MD, UMDNJ-RWJMS

Dr. Bojko, AGMEC chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. He announced that the meeting was called in accordance with the regulations of the State of New Jersey with regard to public meetings. Introductions were made around the table and via telephone of AGMEC members, staff and of those attending as guests. There was a quorum of voting members present, either in person or via teleconferencing.

Dr. Bojko gave a brief overview of the council's progress to date. He opened the floor for comment from council members regarding their thoughts on developing criteria for approval of alternatively accredited medical schools and for approval of clinical clerkships for alternatively accredited medical schools.

Dr. Bojko suggested the creation of two workgroups. One each to develop regulations and criteria for approval of alternatively accredited medical schools and for approval of clinical clerkships for alternatively accredited medical schools. Dr. Johnson expressed his support for this suggestion and further suggested that the workgroups consider the process previously established by the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners.

Dr. Ashong asked Dr. Paul to comment on the work of the Advisory Committee on Alternatively Accredited Medical School Clinical Clerkships. Dr. Paul suggested that a good starting point would be the previously mentioned process established by the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners. She questioned whether the new process would be a paper-only process or would involve site visits. She noted that it was difficult for the committee to anticipate the actual need for clerkship positions as well as the number of positions available. Further, she said that she thought it was important for AGMEC to consider the financial viability of a hospital in making decisions regarding clerkship placement.

Dr. Scott stated his concern about predicting the number of available positions given the current hospital closings and anticipated closings. Dr. Ashong suggested, given the many factors involved and the difficulty in predicting the number of available positions, that the council first define the criteria for the process of approving alternatively accredited medical school clerkships.

Dr. Johnson noted the possibility of another state-funded medical school in New Jersey and the possibility of increasing the entering class size of the existing state-funded medical schools.

Dr. Schiff said that he felt priority should be given to students from New Jersey's state-funded medical schools.

Dr. Bojko said that despite the concerns voiced, AGMEC has a statutory responsibility to develop a process for the approval of alternatively accredited medical schools and for approval of clinical clerkships for alternatively accredited medical schools.

Dr. Bojko opened the meeting for public comment.

Dr. Trontell, of UMNDJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, asked that the council consider on-going quality control issues in the development of criteria.

Dr. Maron of Saba University expressed his opinion that, given the current regulations, there is no competition between alternatively accredited medical schools and New Jersey medical schools as New Jersey medical school students are given preference for clinical clerkships. He expressed his gratitude to the council for their work to date, and asked that the work be completed as quickly as possible, noting that his university has been waiting to apply as an alternatively accredited medical school since 2002. He said that Saba University is accredited in the states of California and New York as an alternatively accredited medical school, and suggested that the council seek assistance from the appropriate parties in those states in developing the criteria for New Jersey.

Dr. Trontell disagreed with Dr. Maron's interpretation of the current New Jersey regulations. She said that the regulations do not address hospitals that currently do not sponsor clerkships and only those sponsoring clerkships at the time the regulations were written.

Dr. Bojko said that he would reach out to council members to chair and organize the two aforementioned working groups.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.