

AGENDA ITEM X-H

Consideration of projecting the need for pharmacy education in Texas

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the report

Background Information:

In April 2002, the Board adopted a *Methodology for Projecting the Need for Professional Education*. The report on pharmacy education to be considered in January 2004 is the fourth in a series of documents that apply the *Methodology* to various professional disciplines. Earlier applications were to medicine (July 2002), law (October 2002) and veterinary medicine (October 2002).

The *Methodology* emphasizes two broad themes: projecting the need for professional services, and assessing the availability of opportunities for Texas students to obtain professional education. It also acknowledges that any decision to create a new professional school should be based not only on needs identified through an analysis of projected demand for services and demand for opportunity, but on consideration of factors such as costs and benefits; examination of various approaches; effects on existing schools; and the state's priorities, needs, and financial capabilities at the time a decision is made.

Projecting the Need for Pharmacy Education is particularly timely. The Board's January 2004 meeting agenda also contains two pharmacy-related requests from institutions: 1) a request from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center to expand its current pharmacy education initiatives in the Metroplex into a full, four-year Doctor of Pharmacy degree program; and 2) a request from the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth to plan for a pharmacy school, which would also be located in the Metroplex. *Projecting the Need for Pharmacy Education* should provide useful background for the consideration of each request.

The staff has found the task of projecting the need for pharmacy education challenging because a number of significant factors that affect the profession are in transition or currently unknowable, thus making it difficult to predict the future need for pharmacists. Among them are technological advances that make the dispensing of (at least) routine medications more efficient, the expansion of mail order prescription fill services, potential changes in the ways pharmacists function as members of health care teams, the use of pharmacy technicians, the implications of the aging "baby boom" generation, and uncertainties about federal and state prescription drug benefits.

The study will be sent to the Board under separate cover. Marshall A. Hill, Assistant Commissioner for Universities and Health-Related Institutions, will make a presentation on the study, its findings, and resulting staff recommendations at a meeting of the Board's Committee on Institutional Effectiveness and Excellence (January 14) and at the January Board meeting.