

**POLICIES AND PRIORITIES FOR HEALTH-RELATED PROGRAMS**

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW  
HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Submitted for:** Action.

**Summary:** On August 12, 2003, the Illinois Board of Higher Education received a draft report from the Committee to Review Health Education Programs, and directed staff to distribute the report and invite commentary for consideration by the Committee. Following release of the draft report in August, the Committee held one additional meeting to consider information received in three separate hearings and other information submitted to the Committee. This item provides a summary of the commentary the Committee received, and the Committee's recommendations.

**Action Requested:** That the Board approve the report and recommendations of the Committee to Review Health Education Programs.



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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At its meeting on August 12, 2003, the Illinois Board of Higher Education received a draft report from the Committee to Review Health Education Programs and called for the report to be distributed to the higher education community and other interested persons for the purpose of inviting commentary for the Committee's consideration.

Following distribution of the Committee's draft report, the staff met with three groups that had requested special hearings concerning certain recommendations. Hearings were held with representatives of each of the following: the Illinois College of Optometry, National University of Health Sciences, and the Chicago School of Professional Psychology along with other institutions seeking recognition of doctoral-level psychology as a primary health care field eligible for grant funding under the Health Services Education Grants Act. The Committee also received written commentary from Robert Morris College, the University of Illinois Chicago, and the Illinois Dental Society concerning dental programs as well as information from the University of Illinois Chicago concerning pharmacy.

This item provides brief summaries of the information received and the Committee's recommendations concerning requested changes. The recommendations presented below were considered by the Committee at its meeting on September 23, 2003.

**National University of Health Sciences.** Representatives of the National University of Health Sciences (NUHS) argued that the Committee ignored the primary care status of chiropractic physician, and "separated chiropractic educational programs from allopathic and osteopathic programs" in a manner inconsistent with the Illinois Medical Practice Act of 1987. In fact, the Committee assumed chiropractic medicine to be a primary care giver from the outset of its deliberations, basing its recommendation solely on the supply/demand data provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES).

NUHS representatives also claimed that the IDES data were flawed and "not based on any kind of rigorous research." The NUHS offered its own interpretation of the IDES data. Rather than enter into myriad debates regarding data manipulation, the Committee has determined to continue the Board's practice of relying on IDES supply/demand data to provide the foundation of its analysis. The Committee is confident that the IDES data are derived using sound methodological principles and provide the most objective information upon which to base its decisions.

The NUHS representatives also argued that the Committee should focus solely on the Illinois residents graduating from its programs. Since the IDES data do not distinguish in- and out-migration, the Committee chose not to include residency status as a factor in making its decisions.

**Illinois College of Optometry.** Representatives of the Illinois College of Optometry questioned the supply/demand data for optometrists, saying that “the report drastically overestimates the current supply of optometrists in the state of Illinois.” They used data from the Illinois Department of Professional regulation, together with IDES data to develop a ratio of one optometrist to every 7,334 persons living in Illinois. Again, the Committee is confident relying on IDES supply/demand data as providing the most objective and consistent information available to it.

The Illinois College of Optometry testimony also raised the question of Illinois residency. As with chiropractic medicine, the Committee chose not to include residency status as a factor in its decision-making process.

**Psychology.** Representatives of the Chicago School of Professional Psychology supported including doctoral-level psychology in the Health Science Education Grants Act (HSEGA) program. They argued that psychology is a recognized health profession, delivering primary health care to treat a variety of disorders. They further cited IDES data that shows that demand for psychology professionals is expected to grow by 10-20 percent through 2010. Since the IDES supply/demand data do not distinguish degree levels, the Committee is unable to make a determination at this time regarding inclusion of doctoral-level psychology. The Committee recommends that Board staff further study this issue and report to the Board in Spring 2004 regarding supply and demand for doctoral-level psychologists. This study can be undertaken in conjunction with the further review needed of medicine and residency programs.

**Dental Professions.** Comments the Committee received concerning dental programs questioned data in the report concerning dentistry and asked for inclusion of dental assisting as a program eligible for HSEGA funding. Reducing funding for Dentistry is a moot point, since there are no private dental schools in Illinois. The Committee recognizes the need to revise some of its data, for example, to reflect the closure of the Northwestern University School of Dentistry in 2001. Dental Assisting was excluded from consideration at the outset, based on the decision to exclude health occupations that do not require an associate degree or higher, unless such occupations require some type of state licensure in Illinois. This information was included in the material provided at the Committee’s June 24, 2003, meeting.

**Pharmacy.** Information was also received from the University of Illinois at Chicago regarding results of a Chain Pharmacy Employment Survey and a Pharmacy Staffing survey. Again, the Committee is confident basing its decisions on the data provided by IDES.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

At its meeting on September 23, 2003, the Committee to Review Health Professions Education Programs met to consider commentary it received on the draft report, *Policies and Priorities for Health-Related Programs*. The Committee made no changes to the recommendations presented in the earlier report, but acknowledges that further study is needed in certain medical fields and psychology.

The Committee concluded that, overall, the Board's policies currently in place are adequate and should be maintained. The priorities and guidelines, however, require adjustment to reflect current statewide needs in the health professions. Adjustments to these policies will necessitate changes to the programs currently supported under the HSEGA grant program, ensuring that state resources are targeted to those areas of highest need. The Board is vested with the responsibility to ensure that these funds are used most effectively in meeting the state's needs, and therefore the Committee recommends that health professions programs needs be reviewed every four years to ensure that state resources are used most effectively on the basis of available supply and demand data for health occupations. In addition, the Committee recommends new grant categories to address emerging needs for doctoral programs in nursing and physical therapy. To supplement those accountability measures currently in place, the Committee recommends an annual expenditure report from recipients of HSEGA grants and reports on persistence, degree completion, and job placement of graduates from health-related programs.

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolution:

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby accepts the report and recommendations of the Committee to Review Health Professions Education programs.*

