

SABA

MR. SNEED: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Committee members and guests. I am presenting the staff analysis of a redetermination petition submitted by the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine, the ACCM, on behalf of the government of Saba and the country's only medical school, Saba University School of Medicine. Hereafter, I will refer to the agency as Saba. You will find the materials related to this report under Tab G.

In March of 2003, the NCFMEA first determined that the standards and procedures used by Saba were comparable to the standards of accreditation applied to M.D. programs in the United States.

In September 2004, this Committee accepted the report pertaining to its accreditation activities involving Saba University School of Medicine.

To stay apprised of Saba's accreditation activities involving its medical school, this Committee reviewed and accepted another report at the September 2007 meeting.

During that review, Saba indicated that its institution's ownership would be changing, and as a result, this Committee requested Saba to provide another report concerning the change of ownership at the September 2008 meeting, which this Committee accepted.

Saba now comes before you today for a redetermination of comparability. Based on a review of the redetermination petition submitted by the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine, on behalf of the government of Saba, the Department staff concludes that Saba's standards and procedures for evaluating medical schools remain comparable to those used in the United States.

There have not been any other known Title IV funds disbursed to this country to date. There are representatives here present today to receive your questions. This concludes my report. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Thank you, Mr. Sneed. It's a pleasure to welcome you, Dr. Peacock and Dr. Lawlor again. Are there questions from members of the Committee for Mr. Sneed or any of the representatives from Saba? If not, may I ask that we go into Executive Session to discuss the application by Saba? Will all of our guests please depart until we consider our next country?

[Executive Session begins:]

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: It's always a pleasure to see you again, Dr. Peacock and Dr. Lawlor. Are there members of the Committee that have any questions? Mr. La Porte.

MR. LA PORTE: I have two questions. So the first question is, is that the Saba University

School of Medicine has been eligible since March of 2003. That's six-and-a-half years ago, but still it does not seem to have received any funds so my question is what's the situation in terms of applying for people?

DR. PEACOCK: The situation as far as I understand it is that the application is active at present, but no decision has as yet been made. I understand that the owners of Saba University School of Medicine are actively pursuing the whole process of trying to obtain the Title IV Family Loans.

MR. LA PORTE: And the second question that I have is that in the materials that you sent us, you had the USMLE cohort results, and I remember looking at the report from I think one year or two years ago, and I don't remember that, and I think it's new, and I'm wondering if you can comment?

DR. PEACOCK: Absolutely. And I'm delighted that you brought that up, certainly from the point of view of the record, and when we were charged with determining what would be a reasonable USMLE Step 1 pass rate, the NCFMEA asked us essentially to go home and think about it and to present our findings at the next meeting, which we did, and we felt that an 85 percent first-time pass rate would seem reasonable for a school of this particular size and standard.

So it was Dr. Jim Hallock, who was a member of the NCFMEA at the time, that brought it to our attention that in presenting the results, maybe it was not as all-encompassing as it should have been to the extent that we were just presenting the numbers who had actually passed out of a particular number who had sat the examination, but this did not reflect the true total. So we have taken in the whole total count or cohort now to actually reflect the true total of people who, one, are eligible to sit the examination, and also the number who actually sat the examination. Does that—

MR. LA PORTE: Yes. Perfect. Okay.

DR. PEACOCK: Yes. That's fine. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Mr. La Porte, any other questions?

MR. LA PORTE: No.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Dr. Maldonado?

DR. MALDONADO: As I recall from the past, you know, almost all your clinical sites are in the United States, aren't they? Or are there others in Europe?

DR. PEACOCK: No, Dr. Maldonado. All the clinical sites pertaining to Saba University are in the United States.

DR. MALDONADO: And are there the same number of clinical sites or have you added any

during the last—

DR. PEACOCK: Yeah, they vary. There has been one clinical site added. That's Brentwood Behavioral Center in Louisiana. That has been added since the last report, since last March actually, yeah.

DR. MALDONADO: Have you visited that new clinical site or?

DR. PEACOCK: Yes, we actually just visited there on Thursday.

DR. MALDONADO: Okay. So it's in good shape?

DR. PEACOCK: Yes, in good shape. That will be coming through in the next report.

DR. MALDONADO: Thank you very much. I also was always intrigued that I thought that there were more medical students in Saba than residents of Saba?

DR. PEACOCK: It's actually the population of the medical school constitutes about 25 percent in the increase in the population of the island. The island has a population of approximately 1,100, and there's 300 staff and students in the school.

DR. MALDONADO: And students. But the whole university and medical school has more students because they're in the States and in other places. What's the total number of students that you have per class?

DR. PEACOCK: We have 300--oh, the intake per semester would be approximately 85 students.

DR. MALDONADO: 85?

DR. PEACOCK: 85 per take, yeah.

DR. MALDONADO: That's reasonable. Thank you.

DR. PEACOCK: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: And they're renaming it Paradise University?

[Laughter.]

DR. PEACOCK: If only.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Two bridge questions, Dr. Peacock. The pass rates on the USMLE, what steps are you taking or is Saba taking to get permission from the students to have those scores released so that they can be monitored?

DR. PEACOCK: Well, it is part of the accreditation process that in order for students to

embark on their clinical training that they have to have passed the USMLE Step 1. So that is incumbent upon the students to report that. From the point of view, as I say, of reporting the USMLE Step 2, and that, once again that is going to be incumbent upon students graduating. They will have to report their USMLE figures for Step 2.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: So the Committee can understand that there will always be the reporting of the USMLE scores which it can monitor then in terms of progress of the students?

DR. PEACOCK: Always.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: And what steps will they be taking to monitor the students' progress after graduation in terms of USMLE and participation in graduate medical education and those activities?

DR. PEACOCK: Yeah, well, as I say, since the change of ownership, the inspection team went and revisited the basic science campus back in September 2007, and on the basis of that, and this is actually in the report, is that a structure is now being set up by the administration of Saba University to ensure that all postgraduate, the postgraduate status of their students is actually being reported and monitored, and they've had some very good success with this.

I think the reason their success is good from that point of view is because the school is relatively small so it tends to be easier to track. It's not 100 percent, but I think that with all the schools we accredit, there tends to be that problem of reporting. Once they graduate, they leave and nobody seems to hear any more from them.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Last question is what is your schedule of visitation of clinical sites within the period of accreditation of your accreditation process?

DR. PEACOCK: Well, on the last meeting of the ACCM, which took place in June of this year, Saba University School of Medicine was granted a full six-year unconditional accreditation so that brings it up until September 30, 2015. So it would be done within that time frame in an orderly fashion.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: So all clinical sites will be visited in rotation in every accreditation cycle?

DR. PEACOCK: Exactly, Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Thank you.

DR. PEACOCK: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Are there other questions from members of the Committee? Dr. Munoz?

DR. MUNOZ: To what extent do the clinical sites for Saba overlap the other universities that

you also review?

DR. PEACOCK: There would be a number. Once again, that tends to vary because clinical sites come and go, but on average we'd say out of the 16 hospitals that we would visit, approximately six or seven would be what we would consider common sites. In other words, that there would be students from other universities that we accredit present there.

But we have incorporated the directive of the NCFMEA about visiting the multiple sites or the multiple clinical sites where there are multiple schools there into our protocol and our elements of accreditation, and this would be ratified as of the next meeting of the ACCM, which will take place in November of this year.

DR. MUNOZ: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Other comments or questions from the members of the Committee? Is there a motion, Mr. La Porte?

MR. LA PORTE: Yes. So I move that the NCFMEA, based on the most recent information and materials received from Saba, reaffirm its prior determination that the standards and processes used by the ACCM to accredit medical schools in Saba are comparable to those used in the U.S. In addition, the NCFMEA requests that Saba submit a report on its accreditation activities for review, I guess in the fall of 2010. Is that correct?

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Well, we're 2009 now, and unless there have been any egregious—

MR. LA PORTE: 2011.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: --it probably would be better to 2011.

MR. LA PORTE: So fall of 2011.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Is there a second?

DR. MALDONADO: I second.

[Motion made and seconded.]

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Is there any question about the motion? Is it necessary to have the motion reread? All those in favor of the motion, please say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Those opposed?

[No response.]

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Any abstentions?

[No response.]

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Thank you very much. Are there any additional comments that you all would like to make, Dr. Peacock and Dr. Lawlor?

DR. PEACOCK: Well, Dr. Dockery, on behalf of the ACCM, which is represented here by Dr. Lawlor and myself, I'd just like to thank you and all your Committee for the courtesy that you've always shown to us and also to all the staff analysts, Mr. Sneed, in particular, who we've had the pleasure of working with on a number of occasions.

I would have loved to have come back in September 2010, but anyway if it has to be 2011, we'll just have to hold off. But thank you for everything.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Well, consider it a welcome always to come to any of the meetings. If you have nothing else to do, you're always welcome.

DR. PEACOCK: Thank you so much, indeed. I'll take you up on that.

DR. CARON: Dr. Peacock, this is Dr. Caron. I just wanted to know how are your other members, your past members, doing?

DR. PEACOCK: Professor Ward is doing extremely well, once again, bright as a button. Professor Temperley, unfortunately, has succumbed to a terminal illness so--that of course is confidential among ourselves--and unfortunately he's undergoing chemotherapy at present and so not doing well.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Well, please give him our regards.

DR. PEACOCK: I certainly will. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DOCKERY: Thank you.

[Executive Session concludes.]