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Conversation between Dr. Stanley Fisch and Dr. Bruce Leibert: 1997-04-04

Stanley I. Fisch

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Conversation with Bruce Leibert, MD - 4/4/97

Leibert is director of the VBMC Family Practice Residency, which just completed a successful match for new residents to begin July, 1997 (the program was 100% successful in recruiting its top choice candidates).

My purpose was to brief Leibert on the proposed RAHC and SB 606. I reviewed the history of the bill and some of the background related to Senator Lucio's advisory committee, a similar committee convened by Senator Truan, and McAllen's venture with Texas A & M to develop a school of rural public health in McAllen.

Dr. Leibert is concerned that all of this, especially the RAHC proposal, is premature. There must be more infrastructure set in place before a RAHC can happen. There must be residencies in internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, ob-gyn, and family medicine. If these are established and coordinated on a regional basis, then his other concern about this might be lessened:

What attracted him to Harlingen, in part, was the monopoly the family practice residency would enjoy. With no other residents or students in the hospital competing for patients and clinical experience, the family practice residency would be strong. Such positioning helps attract faculty and residents.

The establishment of a RAHC holds much uncertainty. What benefit it would bring to the Valley in the form of health care would be limited, yet it would consume tremendous resources to establish and maintain. Residencies are in a better position to deliver care and deliver doctors to the Valley to meet the needs of the population. While a RAHC needs residencies, residencies do not need a RAHC to be successful.

S. Fisch, MD