



Editorial Comment

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Editor

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We received great news with the accreditation of the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine, Texas Tech University, El Paso. Being the first school of medicine on the US/Mexico border it is positioned to make a lasting educational, economic and scientific impact on the region. With accreditation comes the next phase; admitting the first class of medical students who will begin their medical education in August 2009.

A medical school in our community enables residents of West Texas to pursue a medical education in the region in a program with an innovative curriculum that immediately exposes students to clinical medicine. But the implications of the school are also broader. The medical school offers employment alternatives to combat the often referred to “brain drain” of this area and it creates associations with other business enterprises in the region. Schools of medicine energize economies by providing an infrastructure for medical innovation.

The school will attract health professionals into the region to address the pressing health concerns of the area; health disparities being among them. Although disparities are often thought of in the context of access to care and morbidity and mortality; an emerging area of disparities research is ethnic specific genetic difference. Here the school and its scientists can impact knowledge by concentrating on diseases that are more prevalent in our population and translating their research findings into clinical interventions that improve health in the region.

The next few years will change our community. It will be interesting and exciting to see all the changes take place.

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