



Background:

On July 24, 2012 leadership from Touro University and Las Vegas HEALS (known at the time as the Southern Nevada Medical Industry Coalition) met to discuss the inadequate number of graduate medical educate slots available in Nevada. Las Vegas HEALS agreed to “Start a Conversation” to bring industry-wide attention to this deficit.

On June 20, 2013 a panel discussion was hosted at the Oquendo Center. The panel was made up of the Deans of the medical schools of UNSOM, Touro and Roseman University, as well as the CEOs (or their representatives) from UMC, Sunrise, Valley Health System and St. Rose Dominican Hospitals. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Russ Robertson, past chairman of the National Council of Graduate Medical Education. This was the first time many on the panel had met one another.

Upon conclusion of the panel discussion, panelists agreed to continue meeting to address the problem. Dr. Joe Hardy and Senator Valerie Wiener were asked to co-chair the committee. The first meeting was held on August 26, 2013. Additional representatives from the Governor’s office, VA Hospital of Southern Nevada and Mike O’Callaghan Federal Healthcare System joined the conversation, sharing federal best practices and challenges.

Between then and March 31, 2014, eight council and several sub-committee meetings were conducted. Best practices and research from across the United States was shared amongst the group. Critical areas of need were thoroughly explored and debated with consensus being found around areas of primary care, mental health and geriatric specialties.

Debate continued as to how best increase regional capacity, examining cost/benefit between expanding existing programs, growing new programs and the importance of fellowships to further retain those who complete residency in Nevada.

Lively discussions were had around the importance of expanding regional faculty physicians and the need to collaborate between systems, public and private, for-profit and non-profit. Informal discussions, some leading to negotiation, were started to form regional partnerships between normally competitive systems to address critical need areas and eliminate duplication of services.

It is worthy to note that this is the highest level of collaboration we have witnessed amongst the leadership of both hospitals and higher education.