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## Governor Chris Christie Outlines Blueprint to Transform Medical Education in the State and Make New Jersey a National Leader

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Will Propel Medical Education and Biomedical Research in New Jersey Toward A Model of Innovation, Educational Excellence, and Economic Growth

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**Trenton, NJ** – Today, Governor Chris Christie endorsed the final recommendations of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) Advisory Committee, calling it a blueprint to achieve long-overdue reform of the State’s higher education system and usher in a new era for medical education throughout the State. The final recommendations offered by the Committee will ensure that New Jersey meets its potential as a national leader in medical education and biomedical research, increasing the collaboration and innovation between these institutions and New Jersey’s research based industries. These recommendations build on the Committee’s September 2011 interim report and further provide concrete and comprehensive steps to secure the future of medical and health sciences education, research and associated clinical activities in the state.

“Ensuring that New Jersey’s higher education community delivers world-class medical education and training to students is a long-term imperative of our state that has been ignored for too long. These recommendations finally provide an innovative and bold blueprint to transform the structure of our public medical and health science schools for a secure and successful future,” said Governor Christie. “I want to thank Dr. Barer and the entire Committee for spending nearly a year developing these innovative and necessary steps to transform what is a complex and deeply important system affecting the lives of so many New Jerseyans each and every day. I am proud to stand behind these recommendations which will serve as my Administration’s guide to strengthen and elevate medical education in New Jersey.”

Notable among the recommendations of the Committee, chaired by Dr. Sol J. Barer, is a complete transformation of UMDNJ, refocusing the institution on its Newark-based schools and granting a significant level of autonomy to the institution's most successful components. The Committee recommends that the school be renamed the New Jersey Health Sciences University.

By providing significant levels of autonomy to the School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford, and University Behavioral Health Care in Piscataway, as well as to the Public Health Research Institute in Newark, UMDNJ will be able to focus on the success of its primary academic units in Newark and achieve a streamlined bureaucracy. This will allow New Jersey taxpayers to get the most from the investment they make into medical education in Newark.

For the future of University Hospital in Newark, the Committee recommends a long-term public-private partnership for the hospital's management to allow for its continued role as a Level One Trauma Center and a hub of medical care for New Jersey and the Newark community, enabling continued high quality medical programs, increased efficiency in operations and investment in capital improvements in the future.

Equally as notable is the Committee's recommendation to fully integrate Rowan University and Rutgers University–Camden into a broader institution, known as Rowan University and based in Glassboro and Camden. Through this integration, the Committee recommends that this new institution be positioned for public research university status. The Committee found this change will both support the development of Rowan's new medical school and provide an enhanced academic and health care education and delivery system that would bolster the regional economy.

In summary, the Committee made the following recommendations to Governor Christie:

- A revamped and recast health sciences university based in Newark, which they suggest being named the New Jersey Health Sciences University (NJHSU). This powerful academic institution, with significantly increased autonomy for three units – University Behavioral Health Care, the School of Osteopathic Medicine and the Public Health Research Institute – will establish the foundation for a new era of medical education and patient care in our State.
- An affirmative and strong endorsement of support for the critical mission and role of University Hospital for the Newark community and for the State. The Committee recognized the hospital's vital role while also noting that its precarious fiscal position must be addressed. To that end they are recommending a public-private partnership that would provide for the improved operations and long-term sustainability of University Hospital.
- A broader, expanded research university in southern New Jersey comprised of the assets of Rowan University and Rutgers University in Camden and encompassing, as well as the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University.
- Reaffirms Committee's interim recommendation for institutional realignment of UMDNJ's Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, the School of Public Health and the Cancer Institute of New Jersey into Rutgers University.

“Governor Christie's charge was not an easy one, but we want to thank him for his willingness to address the critical issues facing New Jersey's medical education community. We believe our recommendations will positively contribute

to keeping New Jersey a leader in medical education and health sciences training,” said Dr. Sol J. Barer, who chaired the Committee. “We also believe there are no fundamental bars to impede the transformation we’ve recommended and now is the time to act to strengthen our institutions and ensuring continued high quality healthcare delivery to our State.”

The UMDNJ Advisory Committee, created through Executive Order No. 51, was chaired by Dr. Sol J. Barer, former CEO and Chairman of Celgene, and members include Robert E. Campbell, former Vice Chairman of Johnson & Johnson; Joyce Wilson Harley, Esq., Executive Director of Administrative Services at Essex County College and former Essex County Administrator; Anthony J. Perno III, Esq., President & CEO of Cooper’s Ferry Development Association, Inc., and Harold T. Shapiro, Ph.D., former President of Princeton University. At the direction of the Governor, Acting Secretary of Higher Education Rochelle Hendricks joined the Committee in a consultative role.

[UMDNJ Advisory Committee Final Report](#)

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