

COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY 11895

VA constitute the Task Group. VA has taken an active role in this endeavor. Indeed, since VA is the sole central purchaser of drugs for civilian agencies and DoD the only other central purchaser of drugs, the working relationship between the two is the vital force for progressive action. There seems to be no dissent that the other agencies, such as GSA and HEW, will discontinue any central purchasing of drugs. The task, then, remains to decide what DoD will buy and what VA will buy. Each has special expertise in given areas. Reports have been submitted to the Implementation Committee, which has approved the following series of actions now being undertaken by the Task Group:

1. Developing a method of collecting data on non-cataloged locally purchased items which would be candidates for item entry into a central system.
2. Developing an item entry and review procedure.
3. Developing a procedure to determine the best method of supply.
4. Developing a procedure to determine the best method of procurement.
5. Developing a method of collecting and maintaining continuously usage data on items in the system that are designated to be other than centrally stored.
6. Developing a Federal Supply Catalog which would contain all the items in the combined "system".

As stated previously, the degree of commonality between drugs stocked by DoD and those stocked by VA is surprisingly low. One must recognize the difference in missions, the fact that VA has a much older patient population and DoD cares for large numbers of women and children dependents. An in-depth study is required to come to the conclusions that must be reached to implement the recommendations made by the Office of Management and Budget to develop a single system for the procurement and management of pharmaceuticals. Agencies involved,