

11902 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Concurrently, the Defense Medical Materiel Board in conjunction with the Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) is taking related actions to accelerate item entry into the central supply system. Examples of the specific actions being taken by these activities are: (1) classifying the criticality of medical items based on their complexity and essentiality to patient care; (2) designing a uniform system for reporting locally procured drug items utilizing the national drug code for identification purposes; (3) reviewing the adequacy of current criteria for assigning national stock numbers and for making a determination on central stockage; and (4) reviewing the actual item entry procedures. With respect to this latter item we hope to cut in half the actual time from when an item is recommended for entry into the system until it becomes available to the consumer.

Pending the full implementation of the recommendations which will result from the many actions I have mentioned, we continue to evaluate items procured locally for entry into the central system. In the past year we have introduced 130 new drug items into the system.

Mr. Chairman I would now like to direct my comments to the matter of drug quality assurance. In hearings before this subcommittee in March 1974 we indicated that the DoD was willing and ready to work with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop a consolidated quality assurance program for federal purchases of drugs that would meet the specific