

women using the Progestasert device in the UK. May and Baker are obtaining further information, which will be submitted to the medicines division of the DHSS as soon as it becomes available. (A letter on the Progestasert and ectopic pregnancy appears at p 1600.)

### Rent strike by junior doctors

On 30 November the BMA's Executive Committee of Council gave its full support to the Hospital Junior Staff Committee's recommendation (3 December, p 1493) that junior doctors should refuse to pay recent increases in accommodation charges. According to the BMA, juniors occupying hospital accommodation are in some cases having increases of as much as 100% deducted from their salaries—increases which were not in fact discussed with the doctors' representatives before implementation. Juniors are asked by the BMA to inform their employing authorities of their intentions not to pay the increases, so any subsequent deductions for the new amounts would be unlawful. Commenting on the position, Dr Robert Milsted, chairman of the HJS Committee, said: "It is intolerable that junior doctors should be subject to such massive increases. The Department of Health should have consulted the profession, as its action will obviously have a profound effect on the living standards of junior staff."

### Arthritis research

The exhortation "You'll have to learn to live with it" and advice to take aspirin were usually the most that sufferers from rheumatic disorders could expect 30 years ago, points out the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council's report *Arthritis Research: The Way Ahead*. This report, emphasising that arthritis and rheumatism are treatable, summarises advances in surgery, drug and other treatments, and prevention; briefly reviews research and other aspects; and calls for expansion of research. It is published by the British League Against Rheumatism (at 25p) to mark World Rheumatism Year, and may be obtained from the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, 8/10 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0HN.

### Prevention of handicap

The number of babies born with spina bifida in the Glasgow area has been reduced by two-thirds with prenatal screening tests, and Glasgow now has the lowest rate of spina bifida in the UK. Professor M Ferguson-Smith told the annual meeting of Action Research for the Crippled Child. Such a reduction on a national scale would bring the number of affected babies from 3250 down to 1083 each year, he said—or even fewer if more pregnant women had the blood test. "But at the present time the advances which have already been made in prenatal diagnosis and genetic screening are not being fully exploited in the prevention of handicap." During the last year Action Research has made grants totalling £755 000, including £110 000 for constructing a perinatal research unit at the Institute of Child Health, London, and £50 000 towards an institute for handicapped children in Cardiff.

### Kidney transplants

The number of kidney transplants undertaken in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland for the month ending 30 November was 67, and the number of potential recipients on file was 1204. Corresponding figures for the previous month were 49 and 1234.

### New editor of the "British Journal of Urology"

Professor G D Chisholm takes over the editorship of the *British Journal of Urology* on 1 January 1978 from Mr W Keith Yeates, who becomes chairman of the Editorial Board.

### The BMJ

The 52nd issue of the *BMJ* in 1977, to be published on 24 December, will be a composite issue dated 24-31 December. The extended holiday from 24 December to 28 December would make printing and dispatch of a 53rd issue particularly difficult, and hence we have decided not to publish one.

### People in the news

Mr Heinz Wolff, head of the division of bioengineering at the Medical Research Council's Clinical Research Centre, has been appointed chairman of the Committee for Research on Apparatus for the Disabled, a scientific advisory panel of Action Research for the Crippled Child.

## COMING EVENTS

**Second International Meeting on Digestive Surgery**—30 January-3 February, Oporto, Portugal. Details from Organising Committee, Faculdade de Medicina do Porto—Hospital S João, Rua Gonçalo Cristóvão 116-3, Porto, Portugal.

**Royal Society of Health**—Details of two forthcoming meetings, "Law and the practising nurse," 27 January, London, and "Changing patterns in health care delivery," 1 March, London, are now available from the Society, 13 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7EN. (Tel 01-235 9961 ext 41.)

**Royal Society**—Details and copies of the programme January-March 1978 are now available from the Executive Secretary, Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG, reference 92/CAJ. (Tel 01-839 5561 ext 278.)

**Nuffield Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Oxford University**—Details and copies of the programme in basic sciences of the musculo-skeletal system, January-March 1978, are now available from the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Oxford. (Tel 0865 64811.)

**Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland**—Junior Anaesthetists' Group meeting, 29-31 March 1978, Exeter. Details from the Association, Room 475/478 Tavistock House South, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LG. (Tel 01-387 4782.)

**British Medical Association, City of Dundee Division**—Symposium "The medical, nursing and social care of the elderly," 1-2 April 1978, Dundee. Details from the secretary of the Division, Dr H Leadbitter, 63 Clepington Road, Dundee DD4 7BQ. (Tel 0382 457532.)

**Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain**—Postgraduate School on aspects of drug toxicity, 3-7 April 1978, London. Details from Mr R E Marshall, School Secretary, Department of

Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN. (Tel 01-735 9141, ext 287.)

**Chicago Gastroenterological Conference—Symposium**, "Recent progress in disorders of the pancreas," 14-15 April 1978, Chicago. Details from H C Skip Watters, M P H, Program Coordinator, Chicago Osteopathic Medical Center, 5200 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60615, USA. (Tel 312 947-4657.)

**Royal College of General Practitioners—Annual Spring Meeting**, "General practice research and education," 14-16 April 1978, Walsall. Details from Dr P Freeman, Royal College of General Practitioners Midland Faculty, 7 Lillington Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

**European Organisation for Research on Treatment of Cancer—Symposium** on "Controversies in cancer treatment," 26-29 April 1978, Brussels. Details from Dr M Staquet, EORTC Data Center, Institut Jules Bordet, rue Hégér-Bordet 1, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium.

**2nd Belgian-Dutch Symposium on Allergy in Otorhinolaryngology**—"Differential diagnosis of rhinopathy," 29 April 1978, Antwerp. Details from Dr P Van Cauwenberge, Akademisch Ziekenhuis, Afd K N O, B-9000 Gent, Belgium.

**Institutes of Urology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology**—Joint symposium on "Immunological aspects of infertility." For details see advertisement at p vi.

## BMA NOTICES

### Diary of Central Meetings

	DECEMBER
19 Mon	Negotiating Subcommittee (CCCM), 10.30 am.
21 Wed	BMA Council Executive, 10 am.
21 Wed	Joint Committee BMA/Pharmaceutical Society, 2.30 pm.

## UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

### LIVERPOOL

**Appointments**—Dr S L Snowdon (senior lecturer, clinical, in anaesthesia); Dr A F Evans (senior lecturer clinical, in radiodiagnosis).

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF EDINBURGH

At the annual meeting of the College held on 1 December, the following office bearers were re-elected—Dr R F Robertson (president); Dr J A Strong (vice-president); Dr James Innes, Dr A W Wright, Dr William Macleod, and Dr J Syme (members of Council). Dr G J R McHardy was elected member of Council.

### Notice to authors

When original articles and letters for publication are not submitted exclusively to the *British Medical Journal* this must be stated. For detailed instructions to authors see page 6 of the issue dated 1 January 1977.

Correspondence on editorial business should be addressed to the Editor, *British Medical Journal*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Telephone: 01-387 4499. Telegrams: *Aitology, London WC1*. Communications will not be acknowledged unless a stamped addressed postcard or an international reply coupon is enclosed.

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