

tions with the management side of the Whitley Council negotiating machinery. Meanwhile Mr David Ennals has invited representatives of the works officers to a meeting on 20 September.

Drug abuse in 1977

In 1977 12 704 people were found guilty of controlled drug offences, slightly more than in 1976 (the highest figure so far has been 14 439 in 1973). The increase was more than accounted for by an increase in cannabis offences, nearly three-quarters of all offences being unlawful possession of cannabis. Cultivation of cannabis also continued to increase. LSD offences continued to decrease. The increase in average age of convicted drug offenders continues: 61% were aged 21-29 and 15% 30 or more, compared with 48% and 8% in 1973.

The number of addicts known to the Home Office to be receiving narcotic drugs from medical practitioners at 31 December 1977 was 2023, compared with 1879 the previous year. The increase may, however, partly reflect improved notification procedures. Here also the average age of addicts is gradually increasing, the 25-29 age group accounting for 41%, whereas in 1970 19-23 years was the most usual age; 38% were 30 or more (28% in 1970). Methadone alone was still prescribed for about two-thirds of notified addicts, and dipipanone alone to an increasing proportion—11% at the end of 1977. The use of heroin in treatment, alone or combined with other drugs, continues to decline and only 4% of the addicts received it, compared with 13% in 1970.

Fees for life assurance reports

The BMA has reached agreement with the Life Offices' Association for a 25% increase for life assurance medical reports with effect from 1 October 1978.

Ordinary form of report (where proposed sum assured exceeds £1500)	£11.60
Short form of report (where proposed sum assured does not exceed £1500)	£7.00
Report without medical examination	£5.40

A mileage allowance of 12.3p per mile will be paid where applicable.

BMA French courses

BMA members will be given priority for a 32-week French course starting on Thursday, 12 October at the French Institute, South Kensington. There will be two classes: level one (O level standard), 6-8 pm, and level two (more advanced), 6-8.30 pm. The course fee is £35. The classes will be limited to 20 each so early application is advised. Further details and application forms can be obtained from Christine Leonard, BMA, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP (01-387 4499, ext 41).

BMJ delayed

We apologise for the delay in dispatch of the *BMJ* of 16 September. This was because of a serious mechanical breakdown at the printers.

Northwick Park lectures in clinical science

The Medical Research Council's Clinical Research Centre, in association with Northwick Park Hospital, is arranging a series of lectures in clinical science to be delivered monthly at the Clinical Research Centre, the first being on 18 October. Details will be announced in the "Societies and lectures" column.

COMING EVENTS

Royal College of Physicians of London—For details of a teach-in on "Pituitary hormones," 3 October, and the Christmas lectures 1978, see advertisement at p ix.

Institute of Urology—Course on "Nephrology for membership examination," 31 October; seminars on "Vasectomy," 8 November, and "Infection and the urologist," 17 November. For details see advertisement at p ix.

Faculty of Homoeopathy Midlands Branch—4th annual symposium on homoeopathy, 4 November, Birmingham. For details see advertisement at page vii.

Institute of Urology and Institute of Child Health—Symposium "Paediatric urology," 9-11 November. For details see advertisement on p viii.

"Choice of appropriate treatment goals for alcohol abusers"—Symposium, 14 November, Manchester. Details from Mrs T Carter, Training Section, NWRHA, Gateway House, Piccadilly South, Manchester M60 7LP. Closing date for applications 26 September.

Nuffield Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Oxford University—Details and copies of the programme in basic sciences of the musculoskeletal system, October-December 1978, are now available from the Department, Oxford University, Oxford.

British Institute of Radiology—Details and copies of the calendar session 1978-9 are now available from the Institute, 32 Welbeck Street, London W1M 7PG. (Tel 01-935 6236/6867.)

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

For attending lectures marked * a fee is charged or a ticket is required. Applications should be made first to the institutions concerned.

Monday, 25 September

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND—6 pm, Professor J D Hardcastle: Anal conditions and rectal prolapse.

Tuesday, 26 September

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND—6 pm, Professor J Hermon-Taylor: acute pancreatitis.

Wednesday, 27 September

INSTITUTE OF ORTHOPAEDICS—6 pm, Mr N Thompson: Free muscle transfer. 7 pm, Dr J M Potter: Indications for surgery in head injury.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND—5 pm, Mr J Alexander-Williams: Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. 6.15 pm, Mr P McMaster: The current position of transplant surgery.

ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE—5 pm, Dr G Hughes: The connective tissue diseases.

Thursday, 28 September

INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGY (QUEEN SQUARE)—5.30 pm, Dr Marcus Singer (USA): The neurotrophic phenomenon: on its nature.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND—6 pm, Mr J G Brice: Management of a head injury.

Friday, 29 September

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND—6 pm, Mr G T Watts: Reconstructive breast surgery.

BMA NOTICES

Central Meetings

	SEPTEMBER
25 Mon	Consultant Contract Implementation Working Party (CCHMS), 2 pm.
27 Wed	Council, 10 am.

	OCTOBER
5 Thurs	Hospital Junior Staff Committee, 10 am.
6 Fri	Board of Science and Education, 10.30 am.
6 Fri	Working Party on Children's Health (Board of Science), 2.30 pm.
11 Wed	Committee on the EEC, 2 pm.

12 Thurs	
14 Sat	Annual Scientific Meeting, Ipswich.
19 Thurs	General Medical Services Committee, 10 am.
19 Thurs	Dermatologists Subcommittee (CCHMS), 11 am.

Instructions to authors

The following are the minimum requirements for manuscripts submitted for publication.

(1) **Typing** should be on one side of the paper, with double or triple spacing between the lines and 5-cm margins at the top and left-hand side of the sheet.

(2) **Two copies** (or preferably three) should be submitted.

(3) **Spelling** should conform to that of *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*.

(4) **References** must be set out in the style used in the *BMJ*, and their accuracy verified before the manuscript is submitted.

(5) **SI units** are used for scientific measurements. In the text they should be followed by traditional units in parentheses. In tables and illustrations values are given only in SI units, but a conversion factor must be supplied. For general guidance on the International System of Units, and some useful conversion factors, see *The SI for the Health Professions* (WHO, 1977).

(6) **Authors** should give their names and initials, their current appointments, and not more than two degrees or diplomas. Each author must sign the covering letter as evidence of consent to publication.

(7) **Acknowledgments** will not be sent unless a stamped addressed envelope or an international reply coupon is enclosed.

(8) **Detailed instructions** are given in the *BMJ* dated 7 January (p 6).

Division Meetings

Members proposing to attend meetings marked * are asked to notify in advance the honorary secretary concerned.

Lewisham—At Yeomanry House, Bromley Road, Friday, 29 September, 8.30 pm, Chairman's reception.* (Guests are invited.)

Salop—At Copthorne Hospital, Friday, 29 September, 8 pm, Dr I I Macaulay: "The hazards of the oil industry."* (Followed by buffet supper.)

Scarborough—At Scarborough Hospital, Thursday, 28 September, 8.30 pm, Mr G Dearman: "Services for the elderly in Holland."

Solihull—At Birmingham Medical Institute, Thursday, 28 September, 7.15 for 8.15 pm, invitation to Medical Women's Federation, speakers Dame Josephine Barnes and Dr Anne Gruneberg: "The use and abuse of medical women."*

South Warwickshire—At 46 Tiddington Road, Stratford upon Avon, Sunday, 24 September, 7.30 pm, chairman's reception.*

South-west Wales—At Ivy Bush Royal Hotel, Carmarthen, Saturday, 30 September, 7.15 pm, agm.

Trafford—Wednesday, 27 September, 8 pm, business meeting followed by Dr Francis Pigott: "The doctors dilemma."

Wakefield—At South Milford Country Club, Friday, 29 September, 7.30 for 8 pm, annual dinner dance.*

Wolverhampton—At South Staffordshire Medical Centre, Wednesday, 27 September, 7.45 for 8.15 pm, medicolegal dinner.*

Regional Meetings

Wessex Regional Group for Community Medicine—At Odstock Hospital, Salisbury, Thursday, 28 September, 5.30 pm.

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