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EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

Although the number of cots available for intensive neonatal care has doubled since 1980, it is still insufficient to meet every call. A British Association of Perinatal Medicine survey found that in 1986-7 some 9% of attempts to transfer babies for neonatal care were unsuccessful, and a third of the successes took more than one telephone call to arrange (in a tenth of cases more than four). There are no prizes for nominating those regions with the most difficulties: the four Thames regions and Oxford and the North-Western regions (p 169). If you want to be depressed even

more, read Dr David Jarrett, who found little to choose between the decay in Uranium City, a ghost town in northern Saskatchewan, and on the North Peckham Estate, in London (p 197). But, before getting too introspective, perhaps we British should take some if not total comfort from psychiatric practice in the Soviet Union, where even the 5½ million "non-politicals" on the psychiatric register undergo strict supervision to avoid their committing socially dangerous acts and they need a daunting review to get off the register (p 195).