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## EDITOR'S CHOICE

There are no regrets for publishing two blockbusters in the *Middles* this week: the details of the new working paper proposals for the NHS (p 587) (not detailed enough according to Scrutator on p 553) and of the anxieties over the future of academic medicine (p 573) are too important for all of us not to discuss them as fully as possible. And even when as many precautions are taken over new plans as obviously were by Professor R E Cotton in revising

the cytology request form (p 597), there may still be legitimate doubts from the potential users—as no fewer than four letters illustrate this week (pp 597-8). Yet, despite the stresses, doctors continue to live long: of the 11 people commemorated in this week's *Obituary*, seven were in their 70s, three of these in their 90s; there is no obvious consistent feature for longevity except possibly polymathy (p 594).