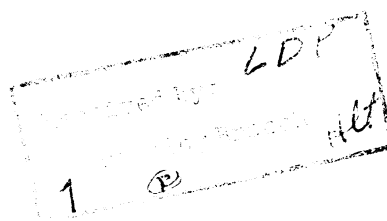


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EDITOR'S CHOICE

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Unwilling to be seen to be condoning homosexual encounters and drug abuse in prisons, the Home Office persists in refusing to make condoms freely available to prisoners. The unwisdom of this is shown by Carvell's and Hart's study of drug users who had spent time in prison (p 1383). Most of those studied had taken drugs in prison, many sharing needles, and several had had multiple sexual partners in and out of prison. The spectre of HIV has heightened everyone's perceptions of the risk of transmitting infections, but, as Morgan and colleagues show (p 1379), methods of decontaminating instruments in many general practices are still inadequate. They recommend a comprehensive code of practice on infection control for primary health care staff, who will be faced with new

demands for minor surgery and more screening under the new contract.

While Rudolf Klein argues that the new managerialism demanded by the NHS review needs to be matched by a new consumerism (p 1351), Raymond Levy gives a vivid illustration of Klein's point that community health councils will still need to monitor the quality of service for the NHS's most vulnerable consumers. Though plans were drawn up in 1986 to build community homes for severely demented long stay patients, Levy's regional health authority (South East Thames) has still not approved them, and patients have been sent to private homes as far away as Yorkshire (p 1397). That is the old managerialism: will the new do better?