

R31.B55
1

BMJ

1840-1990

SATURDAY 17 NOVEMBER 1990



BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL NO 6761 VOLUME 301

INTERNATIONAL

Editorials

- 1109 **Changes in the law on abortion**
M H Hall
- 1110 **Recurrent hereditary polyserositis**
G C Cook
- 1111 **The fetal and infant origins of adult disease**
D J P Barker
- 1112 **Regular Review: Changing view of prognosis of epilepsy**
E H Reynolds

News

- 1115-1120 **Teaching prevention of heart disease · More money announced for the NHS next year · Closing beds for day zero · MRC freezes new research · GMC moving on competence · More help for paraplegic patients · WHO award goes to Princess Mother of Thailand · Back to school for irresponsible drivers? · The law on housing former psychiatric patients · Surgeons doing sums · Avoiding unnecessary psychiatric detention · Trying to help Russia · Mr Waldegrave's debut · Dig deep in your pockets for the GMC**

Papers

- 1121 **Socioeconomic conditions in childhood and ischaemic heart disease during middle age**
George A Kaplan, Jukka T Salonen
- 1123 **Famine in southern Ethiopia 1985-6: population structure, nutritional state, and incidence of death among children**
Bernt Lindtjørn
- 1127 **Long term survival after intensive care**
S Ridley, R Jackson, J Findlay, P Wallace
- 1130 **Sexual transmission of hepatitis C virus and its relation with hepatitis B virus and HIV**
J Tor, J M Llibre, M Carbonell, R Muga, A Ribera, V Soriano, B Clotet, M Sabriá, M Foz
- 1133 **Women in prison and use of illicit drugs before arrest**
Anthony Maden, Mark Swinton, John Gunn
- 1133 **Inadvertent duplicate publication: Quality of life of elderly people (Jayawardhana and others)**

Audit in Practice

- 1134 **Measuring readmission rates**
Mike Chambers, Aileen Clarke
- 1136 **Are readmissions avoidable?**
Aileen Clarke
- 1139 **Can readmission rates be used as an outcome indicator?**
Ruairidh Milne, Aileen Clarke
- 1141 **News and Information**

Middles

- 1143 **Management of "brittle" diabetes with a preprogrammable implanted insulin pump delivering intraperitoneal insulin**
D F Wood, K Goodchild, P Guillou, D J Thomas, D G Johnston
- 1145 **ABC of Major Trauma: Handling distressed relatives and breaking bad news**
C A J McLauchlan
- 1149 **Letter from Chicago: Dog days**
George Dunea
- 1151 **Everyday Aids and Appliances: Aids for visual impairment**
N J Dudley
- 1154 **Tale of two hospitals**
Fiona Godlee, Alison Walker

1157-1170 **Obituary · Correspondence · Notes · Personal View · Medicine and Books · Minerva · (in detail overleaf)**

CONTENTS *pages 1150-1170*

1150 **Filler** Any Questions H A Boon

1157 **Obituary**

J E Royds, R Rankine, J R Scott, L Campbell-Robson, J McL Ross, H F M Bassett, S S Naftalin, Jane Rowlands

1159 **Correspondence**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1159 Juniors' hours
J Hoffmann, FRCSED, and A Fischer, PHD;
P A Bloom, FRCSED, and D A H Laidlaw, FRCS | 1163 How easy is it to contact the duty doctor
responsible for admissions?
C Mattock, MRCP |
| 1159 Long term reduction in sodium balance
J I S Robertson, MD | 1163 Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation
A W Sosnowski, MB, and others |
| 1160 How to save lives
N W Goodman, FCANAE | 1164 Glasgow: city of managerial culture
E H McLaren, FRCPED |
| 1160 Forensic pathology
S Leadbeatter, DMJ(PATH), and others;
M A Green, MRCPATH, and A C Hunt, FRCPATH;
D J Gee, FRCPATH | 1164 Potassium and magnesium in essential
hypertension
C O'Callaghan, MB, and L Howes, FRACP |
| 1161 Carbon monoxide poisoning in the home
M R Hamilton-Farrell, FFCANAE, and
M Nathanson, MRCP; F L Whalley, MRCP | 1164 Trauma of the lower urinary tract
M D Bircher, FRCS, and others |
| 1161 Diabetic autonomic neuropathy
P Kempler, MD, and others | 1164 Diagnosing cancer of the pancreas
A R Attard, FRCS, and others |
| 1161 Ultrasonography and renal obstruction
S J Austin, FRCR; Judith A W Webb, FRCR | 1164 Delayed detection of congenital hearing loss
I Friedmann, FRCS, and W Arnold, MD |
| 1162 Guidelines for management of asthma
M J Connolly, MRCP; A Pandit, MB, and others;
M A Ganderton, MB | 1165 Treatment of viral pharyngitis or flu
Susan M Hall, FFCM |
| 1162 Trauma in pregnancy
R W Johnson, FFARCS; Pamela Nash, MRCP, and
P Driscoll, FRCS | 1165 Justice versus equity for haemophiliacs with
AIDS
R J Ablin, PHD |
| 1163 Cost-benefit analysis of regional neurosurgical
care
J Michaels, FRCSED | 1165 A painful process
A Nicol, MRCPATH |
| | 1165 Management of intercostal drains
D R Harriss, FRCS, and T R Graham, FRCSED |
| | 1165 Nobel prizes given for clinical research
J Hopewell, FRCS |
| | 1165 Correction A new new general practice
(Bourke) |

1166 **Notes**

1167 **Personal View** Doesn't he look like you Hilary Cooling

1168 **Medicine and Books**

- 1168 Ian J Deary: *Beyond Self-Interest* (J J Mansbridge)
 1168 Ian Forgacs: *Measuring the Quality of Medical Care* (A Hopkins)
 1169 Maurice King: *Medical Administration for Front-Line Doctors* (C A Pearson)
 1169 Jane Richards: *A Clinical Guide for the Care of Older Women* (R L Byyny, L Speroff)
 1169 Noted

1170 **Minerva**

EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

As beds have decreased in the NHS and throughput of patients has risen doctors have speculated on the effects of earlier discharge on readmission rates. After a careful analysis Dr Clarke and colleagues suggest in this week's audit section that readmission rates are misleading as a measure of outcome and should not be used (p 1134). Almost as intractable as the problem of finding robust outcome measures is that of junior doctors' hours. Two correspondents from Denmark

warn of the dangers of fixed working weeks and large overtime payments: hospitals can't afford the overtime, so juniors spend their ample time off moonlighting through Europe, missing out on training and clinical experience (p 1159). Another European model—this time for forensic services—comes in for criticism in the correspondence columns (p 1160), along with the Nobel committee for having given this year's medical prize to the wrong people (p 1165).