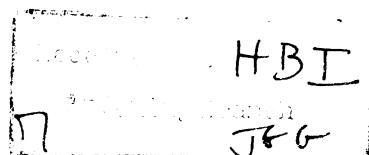




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EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

Despite it being highish summer in the northern hemisphere we begin this week our dissection of the English Department of Health's strategy for improving health. After an introductory article (p 297) first up is the Radical Statistics Health Group, which is unconvinced that this is truly a strategy for health and not primarily one for the NHS (p 299). Most of the rest of the series will be devoted to specialists arguing the case for their areas becoming priorities and discussing what targets might be set and how they might be achieved. Many are strongly critical of the consultation paper. This exercise is not as parochial as it seems because many countries have already set priorities and

many more are planning to do so. The rest of the journal roams widely this week, with research from China showing that mortality from heart disease is directly related to cholesterol concentrations even when those concentrations are very low by Western standards (p 276); studies from Tanzania on the prevalence of diabetes and risk factors for heart disease among different Hindu communities showing that communities of Indian origin should not be perceived as homogeneous (p 271); and a paper on the costs of the Gulf war arguing that some sanctions against Iraq may need to be abandoned for the sake of the civilians, particularly children (p 303).