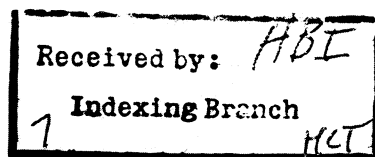


BMJ

SATURDAY 21 MARCH 1992



BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL NO 6829 VOLUME 304

INTERNATIONAL

Editorials

- 725 **Ethics, money, and the human genome**
Norman H Carey
- 726 **Notifiable diseases**
Bryan Jefferson Heap
- 727 **Confidential medical records and epidemiological research**
E G Knox
- 728 **A team future for general practice**
Jacky Hayden
- 729 **Vasectomy and testicular cancer**
R R West
- 730 **Hype from journalists and scientists**
Richard Smith

News

- 731-736 **Results of GP survey · Anencephaly in Texas · Surgeon accused of high mortality · Cholera rises in US · Call for day surgery repeated · Mice found free of Alzheimer's disease · Safeguarding patient information in Scotland · A and E departments must progress · Why elect doctors? · The Week**

Papers

- 737 **Childhood deaths from intussusception in England and Wales, 1984-9**
Mark D Stringer, Gordon Pledger, David P Drake
- 740 **Influence of the Royal College of Radiologists' guidelines on hospital practice: a multicentre study**
Royal College of Radiologists Working Party
- 743 **Incidence of disease after vasectomy: a record linkage retrospective cohort study**
Henriet Nienhuis, Michael Goldacre, Valerie Seagroatt, Leicester Gill, Martin Vessey
- 746 **Melanoma in people aged 65 and over in Scotland, 1979-89**
Pamela M McHenry, David J Hole, Rona M MacKie
- 749 **Home based care and standard hospital care for patients with severe mental illness: a randomised controlled trial**
M Muijen, I Marks, J Connolly, B Audini
- 755 **How much do doctors know about the notification of infectious diseases?**
Simon Voss
- 739 **Correction: Community surveillance of complications after hernia surgery**
Bailey and colleagues

General Practice

- 756 **Storage of vaccines in the community: weak link in the cold chain?**
Yogini Thakker, Sheila Woods
- 758 **Asthma care in Darley Dale: general practitioner audit**
Cedrick R Martys

Education & Debate

- 761 **Infection with hepatitis B virus after open heart surgery**
M B Prentice, A J E Flower, G M Morgan, K G Nicholson, B Rana, R K Firmin, C J Mitchell
- 765 **A right to die**
Alison L McAdams
- 766 **Lesson of the Week: Fatal outcome with use of rectal morphine for postoperative pain control in an infant**
G K Gourlay, R A Boas
- 768 **Leading for Health: responses: Funding health care in the United Kingdom**
Charles Normand
- 770 **Agenda for health: an economic view**
Cam Donaldson
- 771 **Correction: Laparoscopic or minilaparotomy cholecystectomy?**
Baxter and O'Dwyer

- 772-788 **Obituary · Correspondence · Medicopolitical Digest · Soundings · Medicine and the Media · Personal View · Medicine and Books · Minerva · (in detail overleaf)**

CONTENTS pages 772-788

772 **Obituary** D M Wallace, G Currie, H M A S Standish-Barry, P H Davison, F A Macrae, I Gordon, M S A Collis, G F Conway, S M McLaughlin

774 Correspondence

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|--|
| 774 | Quality management in the NHS
K Mackay; J P Bunker and others; R Johnson;
S Dowling | 779 | Diagnosing bronchioloalveolar carcinoma
F G Mayall |
| 775 | Reducing risks in the sudden infant death syndrome
D Keeley; D P Davies and others | 779 | Underreporting of pedestrian accidents
P J Morrison |
| 775 | Monitoring cot death rates
R R Gordon | 780 | Home visits by psychiatrists
A Shah |
| 776 | Neonatal mortality since 1935
J M Gould; S Sepkowitz | 780 | Fundamental principles of the NHS
N H L Starey; D L McLellan |
| 776 | Laparoscopic cholecystectomy
D Shanahan and M Knight; I M C Macintyre and
R G Wilson; M Emberton and R Howerton | 780 | Prescribing at the hospital-general practice interface
R Davies |
| 777 | Hazards of tests of growth hormone secretion
G Owen; R Stanhope and P C Hindmarsh | 780 | One car down
G Bickler |
| 778 | Drug treatment for acute upper gastrointestinal
bleeding
G G Birnie and others; S A Jenkins and R Shields | 781 | On your bikes
N Unwin |
| 778 | Swimming and grommets
M François and others | 781 | Doctors' contribution to environmental health
G Watt |
| 779 | Measles, mumps, and rubella vaccination
A Hill | 781 | Changing to dry powder inhalation systems
S Ford |
| 779 | Transvaginal ultrasonography
V Green | 781 | Action Asthma: privatising the airways?
C Goode |
| | | 781 | Medical arbitration
D L Woolf and others |

782 Medicopolitical Digest

Juniors remain committed to ballot on hours · Junior doctors' pay delayed · Changing role for POWARs · Reviewing doctors' performance · BMA council election 1992-4

784 Soundings

Fundholding: who gains? David Widgery Basic science overlooked in fighting cholera Bernard Dixon

785 Medicine and the Media

Personal views Margaret Cooter Images of disability Daphne Gloag; Sara Davies

786 Personal View

Developing countries need collaborative links Beltus Ivo Bejanga

787 Medicine and Books

787 N H Dyer: *Irritable Bowel Syndrome* (Ed N W Read)

788 Minerva

EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

Do you think that red monkey disease is notifiable? If you do you shouldn't be too ashamed because over 10% of doctors in Simon Voss's survey would agree with you that this non-existent disease should be notified (p 755). The serious point of his survey is to show that doctors are ignorant about which diseases are notifiable and which are not, explaining in part why notification is so poor. Bryan Jefferson Heap reminds us in an editorial why notification is important—for long term surveillance and to enable action to stop potential epidemics—but he also points out that the current list of notifiable diseases is outdated (p 726).

Vasectomy is a simple operation that arouses primal anxieties in some men. It may be that these deep anxieties have led to reports in medical journals that vasectomy might be associated with increases in cardiovascular disease and testicular and prostatic cancer. A study from Oxford of over 13 000 men who had vasectomies makes comparisons with over 22 000 other men and shows no increase in any of these

conditions or any others because of vasectomy (p 743). But longer follow up will be necessary to get rid of the last anxieties.

It was anxieties that they might be out of touch with ordinary doctors that led the leaders of general practice to organise a huge survey of what those doctors did think. The leaders also wanted to encourage general practitioners to think a long way ahead so that they could lead rather than follow in the reform of general practice. The survey of all 36 000 general practitioners in Britain achieved a remarkable 70% response rate. The results are given on p 731, and Jacky Hayden comments on them in an editorial (p 728). She observes that there is a clear tension between patients wanting easier access to doctors for more services at all hours and general practitioners wanting to have a more normal life. The answer, she suggests, is for multi-disciplinary health care teams rather than individual doctors to become the main focus of primary health care.