

# BMJ

Received by: 11/11/92  
Indexing Branch



BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL NO 6865 VOLUME 305

INTERNATIONAL

## Editorials

- 1305 **Letting vegetative patients die**  
Bryan Jennett
- 1306 **The architecture of cancer**  
Jonathan Waxman, Harpreet Wasan
- 1307 **The consultant episode: an unhelpful measure**  
Aileen Clarke, Martin McKee
- 1308 **Whistle blowing: a curse on ineffective organisations**  
Richard Smith
- 1309 **Gangliosides and neurological diseases**  
Peter O Behan, B A G Haniffah
- 1310 **The patient's charter and the triage nurse**  
Tom Keighley, Jan Maycock

## News

- 1311-1316 **GMC decision on Cox · Tony Bland case · Dutch ethics · France's inadequate emergency wards · US public health record · Whistle blowers organise · Condoms and GPs · Health promotion in general practice · Biological markers and pollution · US tobacco suit dropped · Dentistry in decay? · The Week**

## Papers

- 1317 **Randomised controlled trial of effects of coordinating care for terminally ill cancer patients**  
J M Addington-Hall, L D MacDonald, H R Anderson, J Chamberlain, P Freeling, J M Bland, J Raftery
- 1322 **National survey of current arrangements for diversion from custody in England and Wales**  
S Blumenthal, S Wessely
- 1326 **Prevalence of asthma in adults in Busselton, Western Australia**  
Jennifer K Peat, Michelle Haby, Jon Spijker, Geoffrey Berry, Ann J Woolcock
- 1330 **Bovine gangliosides and acute motor polyneuropathy**  
Albert Figueras, Francisco J Morales-Olivas, Dolores Capellà, Vicente Palop, Joan-Ramon Laporte
- 1331 **The incidences of lung cancer and breast cancer in women in Glasgow**  
Charles R Gillis, David J Hole, Douglas W Lamont, Ann C Graham, Stella Ramage
- 1332 **Drug points: Transverse posterior cervicoisthmus rupture after gemeprost pessaries for termination**  
S J Vine, A Prys-Davies, J F Pearson · **Peripheral neuropathy in a patient receiving enalapril**  
A Hormigo, Manuela Alves · **Hyponatraemia associated with paroxetine**  
Cait Goddard, Carol Paton · **Bilateral hypopyon and streptokinase**  
D Kinshuck

## General Practice

- 1333 **Assessment of psychological care in general practice**  
David Crossley, M Paul Myres, Greg Wilkinson

## Education & Debate

- 1337 **Risks to surgeons and patients from HIV and hepatitis: guidelines on precautions and management of exposure to blood or body fluids**  
Joint Working Party of the Hospital Infection Society and the Surgical Infection Study Group
- 1343 **Whistle blowers**  
David Greene, John Cooper
- 1344 **London after Tomlinson: Public health in inner London**  
Bobbie Jacobson
- 1348 **Monoclonal Antibodies in Medicine: Adapting antibodies for clinical use**  
Robert E Hawkins, Meirion B Llewelyn, Stephen J Russell
- 1352 **Medical Education: Student selection**  
Stella Lowry
- 1355 **ABC of Monitoring Drug Therapy: Theophylline**  
J K Aronson, M Hardman, D J M Reynolds

- 1358-1374 **Obituary · Letters · Medicopolitical Digest · Soundings · Personal View · Medicine and Books · Minerva · (in detail overleaf)**

## 1358 Obituary

A M Adelstein, J M Malins, D H Craig, A D M Douglas, J MacNae, J B Heycock, T B Prÿs-Jones, J E Monro, G S Turner, T S C Williams

## 1361 Letters

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1361 Health economics and economists in the NHS<br>R Robinson and B New  | 1366 Cerebral oedema in diabetic ketoacidosis<br>J A Vander Meulen              |
| 1361 Sexual harassment<br>Anonymous; P J Tomlin; C J Bignell   | 1366 Code of practice for over the counter products<br>J G Ayres; L S Foster    |
| 1362 Steroid induced osteoporosis<br>W F Lems and J W J Bijlsma; K Kontula;<br>K F Chung and others                | 1367 Monitoring digoxin treatment<br>T P Ormerod                                |
| 1363 Abuse of elderly people<br>A Homer; P M Haddad and S M Benbow   | 1367 Breast feeding and HIV infection<br>C F Gilks                              |
| 1363 Applying for disability living allowance<br>S L O Jackson; J Lawrie   | 1367 Role of breast feeding in paralytic poliomyelitis<br>A Pisacane and others |
| 1363 Unemployment and health<br>P Lambourne; H Lavender; J Harvey  | 1367 Nedocromil sodium may substitute for steroids in<br>asthma<br>M Bone       |
| 1364 Drugs and the exercise test<br>R Lim and D S Dymond   | 1368 GPs and health and safety at work<br>A Whyte and C Fox; S J Moore          |
| 1364 Using guidelines<br>I Purves and others   | 1368 Assisted conception on the NHS<br>G Bickler                                |
| 1364 Severity of imported malaria<br>D Fegan and J Glennon; R H Behrens; P A Reeve                                 | 1368 Education is promotion<br>J Collier  |
| 1365 Alternative to QALYs: saved young life<br>equivalent (SAVE)<br>P Bayliss Brown; S R Glicher; G Sayers; E Nord | 1368 Nitrous oxide, nitric oxide, and<br>neurotransmission<br>M A Gillman       |
| 1366 Balloon dilatation of heart valves<br>Z G Turi and B S Fromm  |   |

## 1369 Medicopolitical Digest

GPs criticise Tomlinson report · New health promotion package · 1993 pay round: problems for GPs · Curbing the drugs bill · European doctors forge closer links with EFTA

## 1371 Soundings

Cold calling Trisha Greenhalgh  
Usurers' apprentices James Owen Drife

## 1372 Personal View

Diary of a needlestick injury Pauline Dobson

## 1372 Medicine and Books

- 1372 J Alcolado, A H Barnett: *Textbook on Diabetes* (Ed J Pickup, G Williams)  
1373 Brian Livesley: *Oxford Textbook of Geriatric Medicine* (Ed J Grimley Evans, T Franklin Williams)  
1373 Elaine Murphy: *How Psychiatrists Look at Aging* (Ed G H Pollock)

## 1374 Minerva

### The dog that didn't bark

The tendency of authors not to write up studies that yield negative results and of editors not to publish them creates difficulties. Those people mining the medical literature to write systematic reviews know from the beginning that they are likely to be misled. Editors should publish negative studies, especially those that look at major changes in how services are provided—because they are so rare.

Today we publish two studies that we can call negative, although each offers a wealth of insight. Addington-Hall and others have conducted a randomised controlled trial of employing nurses whose job was to coordinate terminal care services from the NHS, local authorities, and the voluntary sector (p 1317). The nurses made little difference to the outcome for patients or their families. Meanwhile, a study from Western Australia that used both subjective and objective measures shows no increase in "current asthma" in 1990 compared with 1981 (p 1326). Symptoms did, however, increase, suggesting a rise in awareness of asthma, changed treatment patterns, or increased exposure to allergens. Somebody somewhere is almost certainly conducting a

systematic review of whether the prevalence of asthma is increasing, and because this study includes objective measures he or she will probably give more weight to it than to others that have suggested an increase in asthma.

John Fox's obituary of Abe Adelstein (p 1358), the eighth chief medical statistician of England and Wales, is peculiarly effective because he places Professor Adelstein's work in a tradition stretching back to William Farr, the leading medical statistician of the nineteenth century, who published his classic letters on the causes of death in England between 1839 and 1870. "Both," writes Professor Fox, "believed that, by promoting understanding of the variations in health and sickness, society could develop strategies for overcoming many of the causes of human misery." Sadly, on p 1331 a group from Glasgow tells a statistical story of increasing human misery. Forty years after Doll and Bradford Hill published in the *BMJ* their study linking cigarette smoking and lung cancer the Glasgow group shows that lung cancer has overtaken breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer among women in Glasgow.

BMJ

Editor's  
Choice