



BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL NO 6876 VOLUME 306

INTERNATIONAL

- Editorials**
- 469 **Managing chronic hepatitis C virus infection**
Johnson Y N Lau, Gary L Davis
 - 470 **Drug smuggler's delirium**
Punit S Ramrakha, Ian Barton
 - 471 **Closing mental hospitals**
Trish Groves
 - 472 **Complaints by patients**
Fedelma Winkler
 - 473 **Paradoxical pain**
David Bowsher
 - 474 **Workfare and health**
Richard Smith

- News** 475-480 **Mental hospital closures · Criminalisation of Aborigines · No new AIDS virus · Disturbed offenders · Apple juice secrecy · Time increases smoking risk · Waiting times and lists · Treasury stalks the NHS · What can audit tell us?**

- Papers**
- 481 **Incidence of severe acute renal failure in adults: results of a community based study**
T G Feest, A Round, S Hamad
 - 484 **Fat and female fecundity: prospective study of effect of body fat distribution on conception rates**
Boukje M Zaadstra, Jacob C Seidell, Paul A H Van Noord, Egbert R te Velde, J Dik F Habbema, Baukje Vrieswijk, Jan Karbaat
 - 487 **Diary keeping in asthma: comparison of written and electronic methods**
M E Hyland, C A P Kenyon, R Allen, P Howarth
 - 489 **Diagnosis and management after life threatening events in infants and young children who received cardiopulmonary resuscitation**
Martin P Samuels, Christian F Poets, Jane P Noyes, Hans Hartmann, John Hewertson, David P Southall
 - 493 **Effects of self monitoring of triglyceride concentrations in non-insulin dependent diabetes**
M W Stewart, M F Laker, K G M M Alberti
 - 493 **Estimating urinary albumin excretion of diabetic patients in clinical practice**
J Johnston, K R Paterson, D St J O'Reilly
 - 494 **Prevalence of procedures in childbirth**
Anne Fleissig

- General Practice** 496 **Comparison of prescribing unit with index including both age and sex in assessing general practice prescribing costs**
Ian N Purves, Clive Edwards

- Education & Debate**
- 499 **What proportion of congenital abnormalities can be prevented?**
Andrew E Czeizel, Zsolt Intödy, Bernadette Modell
 - 503 **Health care in Brazil**
Andy Haines
 - 506 **Lesson of the Week: Arsenic and mercury intoxication due to Indian ethnic remedies**
John Kew, Catherine Morris, Avan Aihie, Raymond Fysh, Sarah Jones, David Brooks
 - 507 **Pituitary imaging is essential for women with moderate hyperprolactinaemia**
P M Stewart, S Maheshwaran, J Griffith, J Li, M C Sheppard, J Olliff, J A Franklyn
 - 509 **ABC of Sleep Disorders: Practical management of insomnia: behavioural and cognitive techniques**
Colin A Espie

512-530 **Obituary · Letters · Medicopolitical Digest · Soundings · Personal View · Medicine and the Media · Medicine and Books · Minerva · (in detail overleaf)**

CONTENTS pages 512-530

512 Obituary

R Thomas, C Ounsted, T P Eddy, B O Clements, H S Heddle, L G M Page, C H Goldman, T B Jones, T Langford

514 Letters

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>514 Re-emergence of tuberculosis
N Kennedy and others; J M Grange; C M Theodore
and others; P D'A Hart; C Hayward; W Fox and
D A Mitchison</p> <p>515 Diagnostic dilatation and curettage
J Weston and others; P Bowen-Simpkins and
J Guillebaud; C Sonnex; S R Hill and N Crossley</p> <p>516 Health promotion in schools
A Tannahill and I Young; S Ziebland and A Rogers;
C Kelleher and B Dineen</p> <p>517 Health promotion in general practice
K Haywood</p> <p>517 Lumbar puncture in acute bacterial meningitis
D J Irwin</p> <p>517 Organ donation
G G Lavery and others; A Nicholls and H Riad</p> <p>518 Death rate from asthma
M Judd and K Jolly; J R F Gladman</p> <p>518 Epidural analgesia in labour
R Russell and others</p> | <p>518 Thromboembolic complications of laparoscopic
cholecystectomy
J O Jorgensen and others</p> <p>519 Consent for surgery for psychiatric patients
N Kosky</p> <p>519 Shetland oil spill
D M Campbell</p> <p>519 Receiving new patients' notes from FHSAs
J Beaven and others</p> <p>519 What the regions say
P V Scott</p> <p>520 The future of FHSAs
J Naish; S J Jachuck; K A Houghton;
P von Eichstorff; J Wilkes; M P Shutkover;
A J Munro; M Levy</p> <p>521 Mozart's scatological disorder
P J Davies; L R Karhausen; M F Heyworth</p> <p>522 The rescuers
J Coakley</p> |
|--|---|

523 Medicopolitical Digest

Doctors' 1.5% pay increase · Pacesetters for the NHS · Merging districts · Defining health and social care · £12m for juniors' hours reduction

525 Soundings The homeless George Dunea; Looking for a loo Tony Smith

526 Personal View Underlying trends in the health service: a master theory Bruce Charlton

527 Medicine and the Media

Multicultural medicine Peter D Toon; Choice, chance, and people Roger Higgs

528 Medicine and Books

- 528 I B Pless: *Road Accidents in Focus* (Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety)
- 528 A W Macara: *Our Planet, Our Health* (WHO Commission on Health and Environment)
- 529 Best books on ophthalmology R M C Gregson

530 Minerva

Instructions to authors appeared in the issue of 2 January 1993, p 55

The excitement of research and a place for anecdote

On p 508 a junior doctor describes candidly what he feels about research. "I could never understand the fascination that more senior doctors had with research. . . . Research was what my superiors did when they should have been teaching me." Many medical students and young doctors (and, indeed, many older doctors) feel like that about research, and it must be one of the major challenges for medical teachers to try to infuse their students with the excitement that research can generate. Once you've got the bug even football or Nintendo seems dull in contrast.

The junior doctor who wrote so disparagingly of research, Simon Wessely, is now himself a dedicated researcher, and in his short piece he describes the paper that made him change his mind about research. Lee Robins stumbled across the complete prewar records of local child guidance clinics, which were about to be destroyed, and then followed up the children. From her observations came vital observations on the roots of adult antisocial behaviour and also a beautifully written paper that inspired the young Wessely. Simon Wessely's short piece appears as one of our "fillers" (pieces we use to fill a page that ends short) entitled "A paper that changed my practice." We welcome other contributions

to this series or to other series entitled "A patient who changed my practice," "The one message I'd like to leave behind me," and "A memorable patient." Indeed, we will take anything that is short, interesting, and well written, and we have some excellent pieces lined up.

Publishing these short pieces is, we hope, a way to carry more anecdote in the journal without undermining its scientific standard. Anecdotes were the stuff of medical journals until recently—and still are for some—but it is usually impossible to conclude anything from them with confidence.

Another place where we can carry useful anecdotes in the journal is in our lesson of the week section. Here the aim is not to publish something original but rather to remind doctors of lessons that are neither so familiar as to be in every textbook nor so rare that it would matter little whether they knew the lesson or not. This week we publish two lessons of the week. One describes two patients with heavy metal poisoning caused by Indian ethnic remedies (p 506), and the other (p 507) teaches that all women with hyperprolactinaemia should be referred for computed tomography because some of those with mild hyperprolactinaemia may have macroadenomas.

BMJ

Editor's Choice