

Received By: *HBI*
Indexing Branch *own*

Editorials	1625 Gene therapy begins Kay Davies, Bob Williamson
	1626 Long term risks after attempted suicide Gethin Morgan
	1627 Management at the MRC Richard Smith
	1628 Human milk and the preterm baby A F Williams
	1629 Health protection and the European Community Michael Joffe
News	1631-1636 Concorde at AIDS conference · AIDS predictions · Juniors unhappy about hours · Children's deaths in South Africa · Triazolam ban · Gulf war disease · Australian health promises · Cholesterol screening · Trusts and employment · Executive toys · Europe's health policy
Papers	1637 High mortality by natural and unnatural causes: a 10 year follow up study of patients admitted to a poisoning treatment centre after suicide attempts Merete Nordentoft, Leif Breum, Lars K Munck, Aksel G Nordestgaard, Alex Hunding, Peder A Laursen Bjældager
	1641 Factors associated with suicide after parasuicide in young people Keith Hawton, Joan Fagg, Stephen Platt, Michael Hawkins
	1645 Prevention of congenital abnormalities by periconceptional multivitamin supplementation Andrew E Czeizel
	1649 Interactions between a general practitioner and representatives of drug companies Brian O'Mahony
	1649 A national survey of the provision of support services for people with cancer J M Addington-Hall, M W Weir, C Zollman, M B McIllmurray
	1650 Relation between sialic acid concentrations and the haemostatic system in the elderly Kazuomi Kario, Takefumi Matsuo
	1648 Correction: Cholesterol lowering and mortality: the importance of considering initial level of risk Davey Smith and others
General Practice	1652 Effectiveness of programme for reducing cardiovascular risk for men in one general practice R L Gibbins, M Riley, P Brimble
	1657 Cardiovascular risk and attitudes to lifestyle: what do patients think? Chris Silagy, John Muir, Angela Coulter, Margaret Thorogood, Liane Roe
	1660 Correction: Developing a register of randomised controlled trials in primary care Silagy
Education & Debate	1661 Regular Review: Management of septic shock J D Edwards
	1665 Lesson of the Week: Extradural haematoma in a child after an apparently mild head injury Patrick A Nee, Barbara M Phillips, Carys M Bannister
	1666 Personality and fatal diseases Anthony J Pelosi, Louis Appleby
	1668 Prescriptions for medical research: I—Management within the Medical Research Council Roy Gillett, Jenny Harlow
	1672 II—Is medical research well served by peer review? Roy Gillett, Jenny Harlow
	1676 ABC of One to Seven: Bronchial asthma H B Valman
	1682-1702 Obituary · Letters · Medicopolitical Digest · Soundings · Personal View · Medicine and the Media · Medicine and Books · Minerva · (in detail overleaf)

CONTENTS *pages 1682-1702*

1682 Obituary

C J Mayo, J P Lythgoe, W H S St John-Brooks, A M Nelson, E Haigh, P C Sinha, A E Doyle, J W Hamilton, I R Moyle, K Rahaman

1684 Letters

1684	Screening for ovarian cancer N Wald and C Parkes; P A Tambyah and others; R Bast and R Wools; D Clements; C D A Wolfe and K S Raju; T H Bourne and others; I Jacobs and D Oram	1690	Long term care of elderly people A Ritch; R D Kennedy
1686	Appendicectomy in children R J Morgan; N Williams; N Kellow; M Cade; R Surana and others	1690	Taking a balanced view on triazolam P McGuffin and M C O'Donovan
1687	Limiting the drugs list M Yarrow; S E Ellmers; C E Pither and J Ralphs	1691	AIDS in Africa C Mbubaegbu; D Mulder and P Smith
1688	The gall stone debate R C G Russell; T Jørgensen	1691	Mental health in children P M Cardle and A Thompson
1688	General Medical Council M S Bailey; T Keable-Elliott	1691	Avoiding coning in childhood meningitis S K Obaro
1689	Women and coronary artery surgery D De Bono; A Majeed and A M Pollock; G McIlwaine and S Laughlin; J Ginsburg and others	1692	Where credit is due H Rogers Keeping up to date J R Bennett
		1692	Provision of acute beds in inner London R M Greenhalgh; B Jarman
		1692	Corrections Simple treatment for night terrors (Maskey) Antenatal screening for Down's syndrome (Spencer and others)

1693 Medicopolitical Digest

Medical staffs conference · Public health conference · Senior staffs conference · Queen's medical birthday honours

1697 Soundings The war comes to lunch Colin Douglas; Something common, something new Tony Smith

1698 Personal view Just another spontaneous abortion? Rosamonde Banks

1699 Medicine and the Media

For people or for profit? Caroline Berry; The military under fire Richard Villar

1700 Medicine and Books

1700 Peter D Campion: *The Children Act and Medical Practice* (Barbara Mitchells, Alister Prince)
1700 G C Cook: *Clinical Tropical Medicine* (G O Cowan, B J Heap)
1701 J M Harrington: *Injury Epidemiology* (L S Robertson)
1701 Mary G McGeown: *Advanced Renal Medicine* (Ed A E G Raine)

1702 Minerva

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

From public health to personality

Judging by their conference last week, Britain's public health doctors are feeling the ground move uncomfortably under their feet with a series of government initiatives (p 1694). Meanwhile, the European Community seems to be suffering from too few rather than too many ideas about public health. In his editorial Michael Joffe argues that it is time for the community to develop priorities for action (p 1629), and Hart reports some of the suggestions discussed at a recent public hearing in Brussels (p 1636). Social inequalities and unemployment topped the list.

Could Britain's *Health of the Nation* (despite its silence on poverty and ill health) ever form the basis of a *Health of the Community*? As we approach the first anniversary of its publication we publish two pairs of papers that are relevant to its key areas.

Two mental health targets relate to suicide, and papers from Copenhagen and Edinburgh follow up people admitted after an attempt at suicide. Merete Nordentoft and colleagues found that such people were at greatly increased risk of premature death (and not only from suicide) (p 1637); Keith Hawton and colleagues found that substance misuse and psychiatric admission were the strongest predictors for subsequent successful suicide after an attempt (p 1641). In an accompanying editorial Gethin Morgan suggests how we should use this information (and that provided by

clinical audit) to reduce the toll of suicide (p 1626).

The second pair of papers looks at cardiovascular risk factors in patients in general practice: both papers have disappointing results. A study of men who attended a well person clinic in Builth Wells found that cholesterol concentration, systolic blood pressure, and weight had all increased after three to five years (p 1652). As the authors could find no published evidence from Britain to contradict their findings they wonder whether the current emphasis on well person screening clinics in general practice is misplaced. Another paper looks at the complicated relations between patients' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour regarding cardiovascular risk factors (p 1657). Most people who were smokers or physically inactive perceived their behaviour as harmful and wanted to change, but few had tried to do so in the preceding year.

So how much could personality explain illness, with those taking up (and retaining) unhealthy behaviours putting themselves at greatest risk of disease? Hans Eysenck, of course, has done most to explore this possibility, and this week we publish the second critique by Anthony Pelosi and Louis Appleby of his (and Ronald Grossarth-Maticek's) research (p 1666). Last time, Eysenck came back with a spirited defence.

BMJ

Editor's Choice

© British Medical Journal 1993.
All Rights Reserved. No part of this
publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or
transmitted in any form or by any
other means, electronic,
mechanical, photocopying,
recording, or otherwise, without
prior permission, in writing, of the
British Medical Journal.

US second class postage paid at
Rahway, NJ. Postmaster: send
address changes to: BMJ, c/o
Mercury Airfreight International
Ltd Inc, 2323 Randolph Avenue,
Avenel, NJ 07001, USA.
US (direct) subscription \$250.00.

Published by the proprietors,
the British Medical Association,
Tavistock Square, London WC1H
9JR. Printed by BPCC Magazines
(Milton Keynes) Ltd, Milton Keynes.
Typesetting by Bedford Typesetters
Ltd, Bedford. Registered as a
newspaper.