

Preterm births, p 1106



Medical detective stories by an adviser for House, p 1148



Moorfields in Dubai, p 1114



Reform rollercoaster, p 1118

EDITORIALS

- 1093 Continuation of metformin after introduction of insulin in type 2 diabetes**
Can prevent weight gain in non-obese patients and potentially improve cardiovascular outcomes, says Adriaan Kooy » *Research, p 1121*
- 1094 Food incentives and completion of tuberculosis treatment**
A free lunch—not to be missed, but not effective as an incentive to complete treatment, says Dermot Maher » *Research, p 1131*
- 1095 Clashes between the government and its expert advisers**
Advisers need clearer rules on how to express contrary views, say Michael Gossop and Wayne Hall
- 1096 Panton-Valentine leucocidin associated *Staphylococcus aureus* infections**
Early diagnosis and treatment, and screening of close contacts are essential, say Jerome Etienne and Dana Dumitrescu
- 1097 Economic progress and health improvement**
Performance indicators should reflect both, says Martin Weale

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- 1099 Children and sunbeds; Future of flu vaccines**
- 1100 Flu vaccine and egg allergy; Safety of propofol**
- 1101 Cervical radiculopathy; Risks at new academic year; Iraqi doctors' training in UK**
- 1102 WMA and Iran; Great Danes; Sci-fi medicine: an odyssey**

NEWS

- 1103 Battle against hospital infections has been too limited, MPs say**
Obama praises Representatives for passing health reform bill
- 1104 Reassure pregnant women over swine flu vaccine, officials urge**
Homeopath society "breaks its ethical code on advertising"
- 1105 Government proposes removing caps on trusts' private income**
X ray machine tops poll of most important scientific inventions
- 1106 Relatively high infant mortality in the US is largely due to number of preterm births, report says**
Doctor failed to follow guidance on interviewing child witnesses
Scientists to consult on animals containing human material
- 1107 GMC clears research dean of dishonesty over access to data**
- 1108 Activists call for health to take key role in UN climate change talks**
"Global momentum" is needed to improve children's nutrition
Doctors call for children hurt in Gaza to be monitored for long term effects of new bombs
- 1109 Aid shortfall may leave millions sick and hungry in Darfur and Southern Sudan, WHO warns**

SHORT CUTS

- 1110 What's new in the other general journals**

FEATURES

- 1112 The dangers of listening to the fetal heart at home**
An over the counter fetal heart monitor can be a fun purchase for expectant parents eager to hear their unborn child. But Abhijoy Chakladar and Hazel Adams warn that parents shouldn't rely on the devices to indicate fetal health
- 1114 Keeping an eye on profit**
With its income from private patients approaching government limits, Moorfields is one of the foundation trusts hoping that the recently announced review will lead to relaxed rules. Jonathan Gornall reports

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE CONTRARY

- 1117 The years of magical thinking** Tony Delamothe

ANALYSIS

- 1118 Lessons from the past decade for future health reforms**
The continual change imposed on the English NHS has caused many staff to feel disillusioned. Chris Ham looks at what the experience can teach those planning further reform

RESEARCH, CLINICAL REVIEW, RESEARCH METHODS & REPORTING, AND PRACTICE

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OBITUARIES

- 1146 Jeremy Morris**

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

PERSONAL VIEW

- 1147 Learning to teach** Philippa Jackson

REVIEW OF THE WEEK

- 1148 A taste for medical detective stories**
Kevin Barraclough

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- 1149 Emotional, my dear Watson** Theodore Dalrymple

MEDICAL CLASSICS

- Operation: The Game that Needs a Steady Hand**
Andrew Baldwin

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- 1150 Dr Doom** Des Spence
Joking about cerebral palsy James Owen Drife

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- 1151 Quiz page for doctors in training**

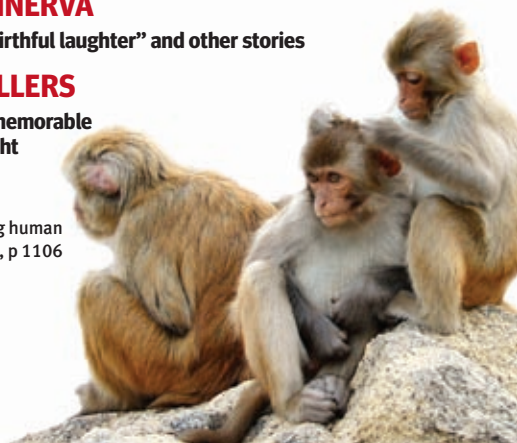
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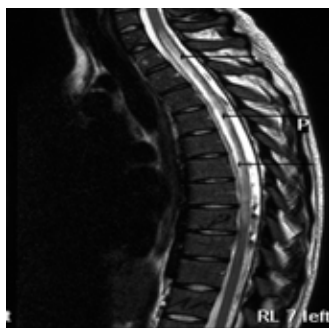
- 1152 "Mirthful laughter" and other stories**

FILLERS

- 1129 A memorable night**

Animals containing human material, p 1106

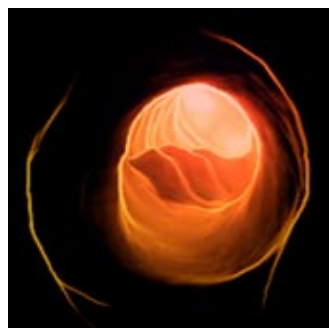




Active myelopathy, p 1143



Personal genome screening, p 1136



Atherosclerosis, p 1125



Overweight or obese children, p 1132

RESEARCH

1121 **Combining insulin with metformin or an insulin secretagogue in non-obese patients with type 2 diabetes: 12 month, randomised, double blind trial**

In this industry sponsored trial in Danish secondary care, adults randomly assigned to insulin plus oral metformin or insulin plus oral repaglinide showed no differences in HbA_{1c} concentration at one year and significantly less weight gain with metformin, though this secondary outcome needs interpreting with caution

Søren S Lund, Lise Tarnow, Merete Frandsen, Bente B Nielsen, Birgitte V Hansen, Oluf Pedersen, Hans-Henrik Parving, Allan A Vaag

» Editorial, p 1103

1125 **Differences in atherosclerosis according to area level socioeconomic deprivation: cross sectional, population based study**

Among 660 adults, carotid plaque score and intima-media thickness were significantly worse in participants from the bottom 5% of all areas classed by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation than in those in areas classified as being in the top 20%

Kevin A Deans, Vladimir Bezlyak, Ian Ford, G David Batty, Harry Burns, Jonathan Cavanagh, Eric de Groot, Agnes McGinty, Keith Millar, Paul G Shiels, Carol Tannahill, Yoga N Velupillai, Naveed Sattar, Chris J Packard

1130 **pico Evaluation of modernisation of adult critical care services in England: time series and cost effectiveness analysis**

Since the national critical care programme began in late 2000, mortality in critical care units has fallen by 13% with lower rates of transfers, unplanned discharges at night, and readmissions, and increased cost effectiveness

Andrew Hutchings, Mary Alison Durand, Richard Grieve, David Harrison, Kathy Rowan, Judith Green, John Cairns, Nick Black

1131 **pico Food incentives to improve completion of tuberculosis treatment: randomised controlled trial in Dili, Timor-Leste**

Among 270 adults with newly diagnosed pulmonary tuberculosis, providing whole food did not improve the primary outcome, completion of eight months' treatment for tuberculosis, when compared with nutritional advice

Nelson Martins, Peter Morris, Paul M Kelly

» Editorial, p 1104

1132 **pico Outcomes and costs of primary care surveillance and intervention for overweight or obese children: the LEAP 2 randomised controlled trial**

Primary care screening followed by brief counselling and education for families over 12 weeks did not improve BMI, physical activity, or nutrition in these Australian 5-10 year olds

Melissa Wake, Louise A Baur, Bibi Gerner, Kay Gibbons, Lisa Gold, Jane Gunn, Penny Levickis, Zoë McCallum, Geraldine Naughton, Lena Sancu, Obioha C Ukoumunne

RESEARCH METHODS & REPORTING

1133 **The tyranny of power: is there a better way to calculate sample size?**

John Martin Bland

CLINICAL REVIEW

1136 **A practical guide to interpretation and clinical application of personal genomic screening**

Emily Edelman, Charis Eng

PRACTICE

1141 **RATIONAL TESTING:**

Investigating recurrent respiratory infections in primary care

Philip Wood, Daniel Peckham

1143 **INTERACTIVE CASE REPORT:**

A woman with acute myelopathy in pregnancy: case presentation

Reinhard Reuß, Paulus S Rommer, Wolfgang Brück, Friedemann Paul, Michael Bolz, Sven Jarius, Tobias Boettcher, Annette Großmann, Alexander Bock, Frauke Zipp, Reiner Benecke, Uwe K Zettl

1144 **LESSON OF THE WEEK:**

Colonic carcinoma presenting as repeated episodes of enterobacter septicaemia during induction of remission in acute myeloblastic leukaemia

Bassam Odeh, David Bareford

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DANIEL LEWIS/WISMEDIA

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

Activists in Paddington station London, illustrate the dangers of counterfeit medicines. Between 50% and 90% of medicines purchased over the internet are counterfeit. The show was part of the Get Real, Get a Prescription awareness campaign launched recently by Pfizer, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, the Patients Association, and HEART UK.

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS

12.4% Percentage of preterm births in the US (News, p 1106)

£70-£90 Typical cost of medical grade ultrasound home fetal heart monitors (Feature, p 1112)

456 Number of patients referred to Great Ormond Street Hospital by the institution's outpost in Dubai since January 2006 (Feature, p 1114)

0.02 mm Adjusted difference in mean carotid intima-media thickness between most deprived and least deprived individuals (Research, p 1125)

1599/10 000 Prevalence of acute respiratory infections in the United Kingdom in 2007 (Practice, p 1141)

THE WEEK IN QUOTES

“Expert advisers must be able to provide advice to governments free from political interference” (Editorial, p 1095)

“There is good and increasing evidence that pregnant women are at higher risk of the serious consequences of swine flu” (News, p 1104)

“Food incentives ... in patients with tuberculosis did not improve treatment adherence” (Research, p 1131)

“There is no evidence that personal genomic screening is medically indicated” (Clinical review, p 1136)

“I wish that video clips, literary intellectuals, and feisty comedians had been around when I was being trained” (Views & reviews, p 1150)

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Encouraging improvement



Research, p 1130

We have two encouraging reports in this week's *BMJ* to ward off economic or seasonal gloom. The first is about adult critical care in England. Nearly 10 years after a major modernisation and funding initiative, which led to a 35% increase in staffed beds, Andrew Hutchings and colleagues (p 1130) report substantially better processes and lower mortality. They say the initiative has been highly cost effective.

We're going to need good critical care as we in the Northern hemisphere enter our flu season. We're also going to need a good H1N1 vaccine, which brings me to the second encouraging report. In July, the UK's National Institute for Health Research called for proposals to evaluate new variant H1N1 vaccines in children. Instead of the familiar researchers' complaint of bureaucratic delay and inefficiency, we have from Andrew Pollard and colleagues (p 1099) a story of speed and cooperation. Four weeks after seeking ethical and regulatory approval, the trialists vaccinated their first participant, and they expect to enrol almost 1000 children in the subsequent four weeks. They think we can learn from these exceptional processes, stimulated by pandemic urgency, in ways that could improve timelines for all clinical trials.

I'm also cheered by the success of our Research Methods and Reporting section. Launched just over a year ago (*BMJ* 2008;337:a2201), it has already published groundbreaking work and looks set to fulfil its aim of helping to improve the validity and integrity of medical research. This week the section comes of age with a paper from Martin

Bland, to my mind the co-godfather (along with Doug Altman, the *BMJ*'s chief statistical editor) of medical statistics.

Bland's article looks at sample size (p 1133). It's a personal and highly readable account that makes an important recommendation. He says we should ditch power calculations, based as they are on significance tests (P values), and instead decide how big a study should be using the width of the confidence interval for a set of outcome measures. It's clear that power calculations have helped drive the size of studies—from an average of just over 30 participants per study in the *BMJ* and *Lancet* in 1972 to over 3000 in 2007. But Bland says they have had their day. Radically, his proposal would remove the need for trialists to specify a primary outcome, something that, as Bland says, is widely abused.

We pay tribute this week to another father of research methodology, Jerry Morris, who has died at the age of 99 (p 1146). His careful comparison of bus conductors and bus drivers showed that exercise prevented heart disease. He was a great proponent of evidence based health policy before the phrase was in common use, and indeed misuse. Two articles this week about the sacking of the UK government's senior adviser on the misuse of drugs (pp 1105, 1117) make clear that some politicians would so much prefer to have policy based evidence.

Fiona Godlee, editor, *BMJ* fgodlee@bmj.com

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WHAT'S NEW AT THE BMJ GROUP

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BMJ Masterclass for Physicians: Cardiology

Monday 1 February 2010, London. Registration now open!

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Gut—latest podcast

Professor Laurence Egan talks to Dr Gordon Greenberg about his latest paper on infliximab and ulcerative colitis. podcasts.bmj.com/gut/

Improving quality, reducing costs: programme announced

International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare, 20-3 April 2010, Nice, France. <http://internationalforum.bmj.com>

Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin (DTB)—November issue

Reviews on aspirin for primary prevention of cardiovascular disease. Over the counter weight loss with orlistat and management of seasonal affective disorder. dtb.bmj.com



PLUS Career Focus, jobs, and courses appear after p 1150

WHAT'S NEW ON BMJ.COM

LATEST BLOGS

In the second of her blogs from Sierra Leone, West Africa, Emily Spry wonders how her nursing colleagues survive on the equivalent of £30 a month. They work at the hospital because of the respect they get from their community even if that means being woken in the night by a neighbour with a sick child, she finds. How do you know if a patient with dementia is dying? Is your body shape apple, melon, or a pear? *BMJ* primary care editor Domhnall MacAuley finds out the answers to these questions and more at the Royal College of General Practitioners' annual national primary care conference. Health literacy is a big subject and increasing it could potentially make a huge difference to beleaguered patients and healthcare systems, Richard Smith discovers at a conference in Frankfurt. Finally, should people who self harm be given the sterile means to accomplish it, asks Julian Sheather.



LATEST NEWS

World's health systems must be strengthened to meet women's needs, says WHO
Free personal care in Scotland may have to end
Doctors are urged to set aside cynicism about government initiatives for the NHS
Read these and other news stories at www.bmj.com/news.dtl

MOST READ

Hyperkalaemia

Only 12% of Germans say they will have H1N1 vaccine after row blows up over safety of adjuvants

NSAIDs and flu

Chest pain

Gagging for it



MOST COMMENTED

Gagging for it

The price of silence

Migraine with aura and increased risk of ischaemic stroke

Trends in Down's syndrome live births and antenatal diagnoses in England and Wales from 1989 to 2008

Hyperkalaemia



Debate the medical issues of the day at *BMJ* Group's clinical community site for

doctors worldwide. Latest discussions include:

Doctors' pay

Swine flu or head cold

Will Obama's healthcare bill make it?

What to cut

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LATEST PODCAST



Home fetal heart monitors can help prospective parents bond with their babies, but do they offer false reassurance when things go wrong? In this week's podcast Rebecca Coombes hears a cautionary tale from Abhijoy Chakladar, of Princess Royal Hospital in West Sussex. In last week's podcast, *BMJ* deputy editor Trish Groves interviews Ike Iheanacho (pictured), editor of *Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin*, about its report on the use of aspirin as a primary preventative. Kirsten Patrick, an associate editor at the *BMJ*, talks to Charis Eng from the Cleveland Clinic about the growth in commercially available genomic screening tests.

You can subscribe to the *BMJ* weekly podcasts via iTunes, or listen at <http://podcasts.bmj.com/bmj/>

Was home secretary Alan Johnson justified in sacking his drugs adviser?

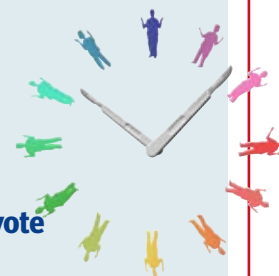
You voted:

Yes: 156 (18%) No: 728 (82%)

This week's poll asks:

Do restrictions on working hours of doctors compromise surgical education?

Go to bmj.com to vote



TELL US YOUR VIEWS

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