

## MRCGP Examination

Sir,  
I suggest to the Board of Examiners that in pursuance of the College's aim to improve standards in general practice, a clinical examination should be introduced. Only when a correct diagnosis or differential diagnosis is reached can the optimum management take place. Exemption should be considered for those doctors who have shown their proficiency in clinical examination by satisfying the requirements of another postgraduate examination which itself contains a clinical module.

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Sir,  
I support the suggestion of Tony Bond and his colleagues (*October Journal*,

p.642) that candidates should not be allowed to sit the examination until they have been in general practice for at least two years. Their arguments are sound. When the regulation enabling candidates to sit the examination at the end of the trainee year was introduced, several years ago, I was a member of the Board of Censors. I had grave doubts whether trainees had sufficient experience to appreciate the whole content of general practice, but at that time there were considerable financial benefits to trainees if they were allowed to sit, hence the present regulations. Circumstances have now changed and I am strongly of the opinion that candidates should not sit until they have had at least two years of general practice. This would be fairer to the candidate and also would enhance the value of membership of our College.

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## Outpatient Waiting Lists

Sir,  
I am preparing a paper on the health and medical care of mining communities, in which I would like to include some data on outpatient waiting lists. These are not published nationally, and in the West Glamorgan District Health Authority at least, the tables periodically circulated to general practitioners listing expected outpatient waiting are marked 'confidential'. So far as I know, no justification has ever been given for this secrecy.

I would be most grateful if any colleagues working in coal mining districts could send me copies of their local outpatient waiting times, for use in preparing this report. When the data are published, any breach of confidentiality will be mine, and may lead to some reduction in bureaucratic secrecy.

JULIAN TUDOR HART

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Symposium on Audit

A one-day symposium on *Audit and Evaluation in General Practice* will be held at Shrewsbury on 19 November 1983. There will be contributions from acknowledged experts in this field, but its most important feature will be work submitted by doctors attending the meeting. Any doctor or group of doctors interested in examining their own activities is invited to submit a report to the meeting, where it will be examined and discussed in small groups. A prize of £150 for the best report has been offered by Syntex Pharmaceuticals, who are sponsoring the symposium. Any aspect of general practice may be examined—clinical, administrative or educational.

Further details can be obtained from Dr Richard Moore, Shrewsbury Medical Institute, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital South, Shrewsbury SY3 8XF.

### Occupational Health

The Institute of Occupational Health, The University of Birmingham, has arranged a series of courses throughout 1983. Details about them can be obtained from Mr F. Gill, Senior Lecturer in Occupational Hygiene, Institute of Occupational Health, The University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TJ. (Tel: 021 472-1301 ext. 3500)

### SIMG—Autumn Congress

The autumn congress of the *Societas Internationalis Medicinæ Generalis* will be held in Klagenfurt from 19 to 24 September 1983. The topics of the congress include "Allergic Diseases", "Home Visits", "The Holistic Approach in General Practice", "Primary Health Care and the World Health Organisation" and "Health Problems of Minority Groups". Further details of the programme can be obtained from Mrs S. Taupe, Executive Secretary, SIMG General Secretariat, A.9020 Klagenfurt, Bahnhofstrasse 22/VI, West Germany.

### Stress and Tension Control

The 2nd international interdisciplinary conference on stress and tension control will be held at the University of Sussex, Brighton, between 30 August and 3 September 1983. Topics for consideration include tension control, bio-feedback, autogenic training, progressive relaxation and other techniques used in experimental and clinical studies in the management of stress. The programme includes workshops and demonstrations of practical methods. Further information can be obtained from ISTCS (Sussex) Conference, 14 Cranleigh Avenue, Rottingdean, Sussex BN2 7GT.

### Colostomy Welfare Group

The Colostomy Welfare Group has arranged a one-day seminar on 25 March 1983 at Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall, Horton Street, London W8 7NZ. During the day consideration will be given to stoma care problems. Further information about the day, or the Colostomy Welfare Group, can be obtained from the Director, 38/39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BB.

### Reminders

- 26 February. MRCGP examination study day. See *January Journal*.
- 28-31 March. Pharmacological treatments for alcoholism. See *December Journal*.
- 6-8 April. Research in rehabilitation. See *November Journal*.
- 17-20 April. Towards better general practice. See *October Journal*.
- 21 and 22 April. Contemporary issues in mental health. See *October Journal*.
- 20-24 May. WONCA international world conference. See *January Journal*.
- 6-9 June. Seminar on psychosomatic disorders. See *January Journal*.
- 8-11 September. Malaysia—Singapore Congress of Medicine. See *December Journal*.