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**MEDICAL NEWS**

Dr A. J. Bennet, M.R.C.G.P. of Inverness has been awarded a Queen's Commendation for gallantry. This was presented to him by Mr Maurice Macmillan, Secretary of State for Employment.

**EVALUATION OF VOCATIONAL  
TRAINING FOR GENERAL  
PRACTITIONERS**

The Department of Health and Social Security has given a supplementary grant of up to £1,800 to the Postgraduate Medical Institute, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, to support the comparative study and evaluation of vocational training for general practitioners being conducted in Newcastle, Manchester and Ipswich.

**VASECTOMY**

The National Health Service (Family Planning) Amendment Bill has now been passed in Parliament with an amendment from the Lords to allow local authorities to give advice and treatment for voluntary vasectomy.

**SPEECH THERAPY SERVICE**

The Committee of Enquiry into Speech Therapy Services has advised the creation of a central council for speech therapy, and that the present staff of 800 be raised to a target of 2,500 speech therapists as the long-term aim.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

The 49th Congress of the South African Medical Association will be held from 24 to 28 September, 1973. It is the intention of the

organising committee to make this congress a special appeal to family doctors.

**NEW ZEALAND**

Following the Commonwealth games in February 1974, the new independent College of General Practitioners of New Zealand will hold its inaugural conference.

**MACCABAEAN PRIZE AND MEDAL**

Entries for the Maccabaeian Prize of £30 and a bronze medal are now invited for an essay of 4,000 to 6,000 words on some aspect of the history of medicine or pharmacy. Intending candidates, who must be under 30 years of age on 15 March, 1973, may apply for further particulars to the Honorary Secretary of the Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy, Dr J. K. Crellin, The Wellcome Institute of the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1.

**THE MEDICAL COUNCIL ON  
ALCOHOLISM**

**Library and Information Service**

The Medical Council on Alcoholism is pleased to announce the establishment of a library and information service designed to help anyone wishing to study some particular aspect of alcohol, alcoholism and the problems connected with these.

Apart from a fairly representative selection of books on the subject, which is hoped to enlarge considerably in the near future, the M.C.A. subscribes to the Classified Abstract Archives of Alcohol literature and also receives a monthly collection of abstracts from the medical literature analysis and retrieval system, and for this reason the library is considered as one of the most comprehensive in the country. In addition the Council subscribes to many of the Journals more directly concerned with alcoholism.

The Service is available, free of charge, to the professional and lay public and can be made use of by telephone (01-493-0081), or correspondence (8 Bourdon Street, London W1X 9HY), or by personal enquiries, Mondays to Fridays, between 09.30 and 17.00 hours.

It is regretted that, for the present at least, it is not possible to supply books on loan, but photocopies of articles and abstracts can be obtained at a nominal charge.

**GENERAL-PRACTITIONER PAPERS**

1. BISLEY, B. L., LASK, A., MENDELL, D. &

- SHEPHERD, F. S. (1972). A trial of an antirheumatic cream. *British Journal of Clinical Practice*, **26**, 477-479.
2. BROOKS, D. & MAUDAR, A. (1972). Pathogenesis of the urethral syndrome in women and its diagnosis in general practice. *Lancet*, **2**, 893-898.
  3. BURNS, C. (1972). Geriatric care in a welfare home. *Ulster Medical Journal*, **41**, 149-154.
  4. CALVERT, F. R. (1972). The Scottish air ambulance service. *Health Bulletin (Edinburgh)*, **30**, 269-272.
  5. CULL, T. (1972). The general practitioners' view. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*, **48**, 266-267 (of casualty services).
  6. CULLEN, K. J. (1972). Climate and chest disorders in school-children. *British Medical Journal*, **4**, 65-67.
  7. DRINKWATER, C. K. (1972). Vocational training for general practice: a comparison of the views of trainees and teachers. *British Medical Journal*, **4**, 96-98.
  8. DRIVER, S. C., SHEPHERD, D. U. & WALPOLE, G. R. O. (1972). A comparison of three methods of using television for the continuing medical education of general practitioners. *British Journal of Medical Education*, **6**, 246-252. (this is in Australia.)
  9. FLOYD, C. B. (1972). A car service in general practice. *Medical Digest*, **17**, No. 10, 17-24.
  10. FRY, J. (1972). Practice size and staff. *Update*, **5**, 1035.
  11. GOODMAN, M. (1972). Organisation in a new town. *Update*, **5**, 905-910.
  12. GROB, P. R., MANNERS, B. T. B. & Gibbs, F. J. (1972). The evaluation of a dip slide containing trimethoprim and sulphamethoxazole in the management of urinary tract infection. *British Journal of Clinical Practice*, **26**, 479-480.
  13. HOBBS, J. J. (1972). Family planning in general practice. *Update*, **5**, 1053-1060.
  14. MARKS, J. H. (1972). The family-practitioner services—future possibilities. *Royal Society of Health Journal*, **92**, 231-235.
  15. MORRELL, D. C. & Kasap, H. S. (1972). The effect of an appointment system on demand for medical care. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, **1**, 143-151.
  16. PINSENT, R. J. F. H. (1972). The future of practice recording. *Update*, **5**, 895-896.
  17. PINSENT, R. J. F. H. (1972). Summary cards. *Update*, **5**, 891-892.
  18. RATOFF, L. (1972). The social worker. *Update*, **5**, 1047-1050.
  19. REA, J. N. (1972). Social aspects of pregnancy. A general practitioner's view. *Public Health*, **86**, 165-168.
  20. WALT, F. (1972). Roseola. *Update*, **5**, 841-842.

## Correspondence

### GENERAL PRACTITIONERS AND CONTRACEPTION

Sir,

Dr J. J. Hobbs' important observations (September *Journal*) on the effect of vasectomy on the acceptability of the Pill will have a far reaching effect on health education, but his comments on the Health Education Council's advertisement suggest that its purpose has not been understood.

The intention was to provide a service to the public by offering *information* about every form of contraceptive practice available at the present time. There is, of course, a need for a comprehensive contraceptive service within the NHS which is available to all, but in the meantime the advertisement has opened the door to discussion of a matter which still tends to be avoided.

Emotional factors are amongst the reasons why couples are willing to rely on "less-than-perfect practices". The factual situation is revealed in the recent report of the Birth Control Campaign (1972)

which quotes an estimate of the Family Planning Association that of 4,350,000 women using contraceptives, only 1,800,000 are using the Pill, while the numbers where husbands use a condom is approximately the same—1,750,000.

Over 600 letters were received in this office as a result of the advertisement and these revealed many doubts and anxieties, as well as misunderstandings, about contraception which are not likely to be resolved merely by telling people that oral contraception and sterilisation are the only completely reliable methods.

Emotional barriers to the adoption of health practices are gradually overcome by educational techniques and these can be employed by health educators in person-to-person sessions in family planning clinics. One result of our advertisement has been to provide diagnostic clues to the nature of these emotional barriers.

We are impressed with the success of this advertisement and we intend to repeat it in the