

The best form of primary care for students has not yet been established and the quality of service provided has not yet been evaluated in comparison with the main alternative. Are separate medical services justified or not?

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SIR CHARLES HASTINGS PRIZE

THE Sir Charles Hastings Prize of the British Medical Association is in danger. Named after the founder of the B.M.A., it was first awarded in 1926 and the Charles Oliver Hawthorne Clinical Prize was introduced in 1951 for the runner-up in the same competition.

These prizes were open for annual competition by general practitioners in the British Commonwealth and the conditions required the submission of an essay reporting 'systematic observation, research and record in general practice.'

General practice is less well-endowed with prizes than most other branches of medicine; even today, only the James Mackenzie Prize of the Royal College of General Practitioners, the Hunterian Society Gold Medal and the Butterworth Gold Medal of the College are available for competition by general practitioners reporting clinical research—and the terms of reference of both the gold medals may in some years require a non-clinical entry.

The list of previous winners shows that this competition has often identified early those who later developed a major interest in general-practitioner research.

The association between this prize and the College is remarkable. College members have won it every year except four since the College was founded in 1952, including such well-known college names as G. I. Watson, C. A. H. Watts, J. Fry, M. I. Cookson, C. R. Kay, and I. Gregg; two of the College's research units are directed by Hastings prizewinners, and the 1973 Council is attended by all the three practitioners who have won it twice. Surely the College should seek to save it.?

The Hastings prize was unique. Not only was it open to general practitioners in many different countries (being won from New Zealand in 1935 and 1937) but it was generously funded with a prize of £125. It alone had a major second prize and, most important of all, unique among general-practitioner competitions it allowed the entrant to *choose his own subject*. Both the Hunterian and Butterworth Gold Medals are awarded for essays set on prescribed subjects. Finally, the requirement to write in essay form added a valuable literary connotation.

Three years ago, the Council of the B.M.A. debated the future of this prize and by a small majority agreed that it should be stopped and its form recast. It has not been awarded since 1970.

Time is passing. General practice is in danger of losing one of its few major prizes. If so, this is particularly sad when the new professionally-trained group of young doctors arriving from the vocational training schemes might find it particularly attractive. Paradoxically, the prize is being lost just when it is needed most.

This is a matter for the Council of the B.M.A. However, the College now has great experience in academic awards of all kinds in general practice. Could it now offer to help in the arrangements or, if the administrative difficulties appear too great, even organise the competition on behalf of the B.M.A.?

PREVENT

An interesting new journal has been published called *Prevent* which is designed to be of interest to all those who seek to prevent disease. It is designed to bring together contributors from a wide range of disciplines and its terms of reference are described in a leading article by Sir Derrick Dunlop.

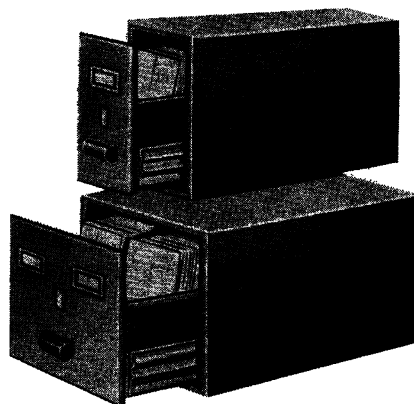
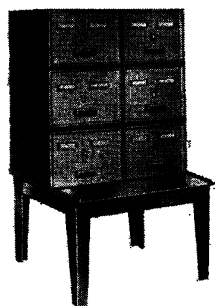
The first issue contains articles on the prevention of drug abuse, the epidemic of self-poisoning, factors in the prevention of diabetes, prevention of periodontal disease, and the responsibilities of the veterinary profession, as well as a description of the dissemination of *Staphylococcus aureus* by hospital patients.

There will be six issues a year and the subscription is £10.00 per annum in the United Kingdom with some discounts available. At a time when thinking in general practice is increasingly moving into the field of preventive medicine, this new journal is to be welcomed. We wish it well.

REFERENCE

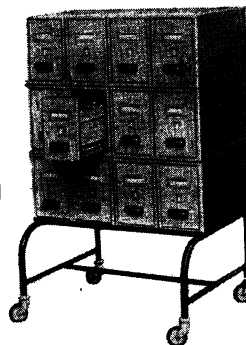
Prevent (1972). London: 124 Upton Lane, E7.

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