
COLLEGE NEWS

NEW READING

The college Library is now maintaining up-to-date lists of material published from and about general practice. These lists are particularly useful for vocational trainees, those preparing for the MRCGP examination, and trainers. A sample copy will be sent on request; the full set for 1977 costs £2.50. Applications should be sent to: the Library, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU.

MRCGP EXAMINATIONS

The dates for the next two MRCGP examinations are as follows:

November/December 1977

Written papers: Thursday, 3 November 1977.

Orals: during the week ending 17 December 1977.

Closing date: 22 September 1977.

May/July 1978

Written papers: Thursday, 18 May 1978.

Orals: during the week ending 1 July 1978 and the week ending 8 July 1978.

Closing date: 6 April 1978.

The written papers will be held in London, Leeds, Manchester, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Aberdeen, Cardiff, Belfast and Dublin. These and other centres may be used as required, subject to a minimum (and in some centres maximum) number of candidates. Oral examinations will be held in London and Edinburgh.

The application fee is £50 and the re-application fee £25.

MEDICAL NEWS

FACULTY OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF THE UK

The following Officers have been elected for 1977/78: Dr W. G. Harding, President; Dr T. McL. Galloway, Vice-President; Dr M. F. H. Bush, Registrar; Professor J. Knowelden, Academic Registrar; and Dr G. D. Duncan, Treasurer.

EEC DOCTORS

An Order in Council which came into effect on 10 June 1977 enables doctors who are EEC nationals and have a recognized qualification awarded in a member state to be authorized to practise in the UK. Corresponding provisions have been or will be made in other member states.

The Order includes a provision for the registration of doctors from the EEC to lapse after a period, normally six months, unless the doctor concerned has satisfied the General Medical Council that he has the necessary knowledge of English.

Doctors from other member states who wish to establish themselves in the UK will be registered by the General

Medical Council on the same basis as doctors qualifying in the UK.

The General Medical Council has been designated (and this is confirmed in the Order) as the authority competent to issue the new "certificates of specialist training", which will be the recognized UK specialist qualification for the purpose of free movement within the Community. The General Medical Council will maintain a list, called the "specialist list", of doctors who are nationals of any member state and have specialist qualifications entitled to recognition within the Community.

RUBELLA IMMUNIZATION AND TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

In the years 1972, 1973, 1974 and 1975 respectively, 33, 22, 32 and 24 patients underwent termination of pregnancy as a result of rubella immunization.

Reference

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (1977). *OPCS Monitor*, 24 May.

PRACTICE EXPENSES

The Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration in its seventh

report, 1977, has estimated practice expenses for the year 1977/78 at £4,500. The Review Body's estimate for 1976/77 was £4,260.

It is thought that the new estimate exceeds for the first time 50 per cent of the planned net remuneration of general practitioners for 1977/78 of £8,818 per annum.

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

The Senior Lecturer at the Department of General Practice, University of Dundee, has been appointed to succeed to a single-handed practice in Dundee from which the principal is soon to retire. This means that the Professor and Senior Lecturer will be actively involved in everyday care of patients. It is intended, while providing general-practitioner care to patients, to create and use additional teaching opportunities now made possible by this development in the Department's programme.

PRIVATE BEDS

The Secretary of State for Social Services announced in May 1977 details of the reduction of the first 1,000 pay beds under the Health Services Act 1976.

COST AND CHARGES IN THE FAMILY PRACTITIONER SERVICES

The estimated costs and charges in the family practitioner services for 1976/77 are as follows:

	Gross	Charges	£ million 1976/77
General medical services	352.4	—	352.4
General dental services	229.8	43.0	186.8
General ophthalmic services	64.1	23.1	41.0
Pharmaceutical services	532.2	28.7	503.5
Totals	1,178.5	94.8	1,083.7

Reference

Hansard Official Report (1976). 927, No. 1066, col. 654.

HEALTH AND PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES STATISTICS FOR ENGLAND

Hospital pharmacists

Between 30 September 1974 and 30 September 1975 the number of whole-time equivalent hospital pharmacists in England rose by 18 per cent from 1,759 to 2,077.

General practitioners

There were 26,197 general medical practitioners in the NHS in Great Britain on 1 October 1975. Of these 21,752 practised in England.

Prescriptions

A total of 334,648 million prescriptions was dispensed in Great Britain in 1975 at a total cost of £431,613 m. The average total cost per prescription was £1.29 and the average net ingredient cost 94.9p.

The average number of prescriptions per person on doctors' lists was 6.25.

The proportion of prescriptions for proprietary preparations increased in England from 81 per cent in 1974 to 82 per cent in 1975.

The largest group of prescriptions in England in 1975 was preparations acting on the nervous system, whereas the most expensive group was preparations acting on the cardiovascular system.

The number of prescriptions for barbiturates was 6,737 million, which was one million less than in 1974.

Prescriptions for non-barbiturate hypnotics increased from 8,846 million to 9,743 million.

Cost of pharmaceutical services

The cost of the pharmaceutical services in England in 1974/75 was 7.5 per cent of the total cost of the health and personal social services. This compares with figures for 1970/71, £176 m (8.8 per cent); 1971/72, £199 m (8.8 per cent); 1972/73, £226 m (8.7 per cent) and 1973/74, £249 m (8.2 per cent).

Reference

Health and Personal Social Services Statistics for England (1976). London: HMSO.

THE REVIEW BODY ON DOCTORS' AND DENTISTS' REMUNERATION

Role of the Review Body

"We recognize that, in the short term, some injustices may be inevitable in current circumstances, but we are bound to point to the consequences if a rational and orderly pay structure is not restored before long for doctors and dentists in the NHS. Only when this is possible will confidence be restored. Morale has suffered a serious decline in the last few years, and we see it as essential for the effectiveness of the NHS and for the good of the community as a whole for this decline to be reversed. We also see very real difficulties in the way of continuing to function as an independent review body unless it again becomes possible for us to have full regard to the principles behind the aims so clearly expressed by the Royal Commission on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (paragraph 1) in the exercise of our collective judgment."

Contraceptive services in general practice

The proportion of general practitioners who provide these services has risen from 92 per cent of all principals in 1975 to 94 per cent in 1976. The number of patients who receive the service has also risen, from 1.4 million patients for ordinary services in 1975 to 2.2 million in 1976, and from 15,000 for IUD services in 1975 to 58,000 patients in 1976.

Distinction awards

"We have found that, although the proportion of consultants holding an award has remained relatively stable at just over one third since the inception of the scheme in 1948, the proportion of those who spend a full career (to 65 years or over) in the hospital service and who secure an award has risen steadily in recent years and is now more than 60 per cent, of whom one half retire with a B award or higher. In general, the way in which the scheme has been operated

seems in some ways to be similar to a system of promotion within a hierarchical structure."

Reference

Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (1977). Command 6800, p. 21. London: HMSO.

DENTAL STATISTICS

The Secretary of State for Social Services recently reported that the number of permanent teeth extracted by the general dental services in England had fallen by over 20 per cent during the past five years, although the number of courses of treatment had risen by over 24 per cent.

WEARING SEAT BELTS IN CARS

On 26 April 1977, a Bill to enforce the wearing of seat belts in cars, which had the support of the Government, was defeated in the House of Lords by 55 votes to 53.

Reference

British Medical Journal (1977). 1, 1225.

GOVERNMENT AID FOR DISABLED PRESSURE GROUPS

Mr Alfred Morris, Minister for the Disabled, recently announced that his Department gave over £385,000 in 1974/75 to aid pressure groups. Among the independent organizations representing disabled people the Royal National Institute for the Blind received £150,000, the Central Council for the Disabled £90,000 and the Disabled Living Foundation over £80,000. Smaller grants were also made, for example, £5,000 to the Disablement Income Group.

CORRECTION

In Dr P. Rutledge's article, *Reviewing an Appointment System*, published in the *March Journal*, it was stated that a feeling of bitterness and frustration was apparent in three or four of the critical replies. This should have read three quarters of the critical replies.