

*cet, British Medical Journal, Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners, Journal of Clinical Science, and Journal of Medical Illustration.*

## HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL

Dr Brian B. Lloyd has been appointed Chairman of the Health Education Council. Dr Lloyd is 58 and a Director of the Oxford Polytechnic and a physiologist by profession. He has been a member of the Health Education Council since 1975 and is at present Chairman of its Education Committee.

## PRESCRIPTION CHARGES

Prescription charges were increased from 16 July 1979 to 45p an item.

Charges for elastic hosiery are 50p an item, £1.00 for an elastic stocking, £2.00 per pair.

The charge for prepayment certificates starting on or after 16 July 1979 will be £4.50 for a six-month certificate, and £8.00 for a 12-month certificate.

## CHURCHILL TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIPS

Churchill Travelling Fellowships are again being awarded for 1980 and among the categories this time are community health workers, who include nurses, general practitioners, home help organizers, and all those providing health care in the community.

Grants are offered for candidates from all walks of life who wish to develop a special interest through travel and a project may be proposed in any country the candidate chooses. The only requirement is that they have to show

they can make an effective use of the opportunities both whilst they are abroad and when they return.

Successful candidates will be expected to start their travels during 1980, making their own arrangements within the scope of the grant. The grant will recover return air fare plus all travel and living expenses abroad for a period of three months.

Further details can be obtained from Miss A. Seagrim, Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, 15 Queen's Gate Terrace, London SW7 5PR.

## FACULTY OF GENERAL PRACTICE OF THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Faculty of General Practice of the College of Medicine of South Africa is holding a Congress in Cape Town in March 1980. For further details applications should be made to Dr Stanley Levenstein, General Practice Congress Steering Committee, PO Box 253, Rondebosch, 7700 Cape Town, South Africa.

## SIMG/JANSSEN AWARD

Entries are invited for the 1980 SIMG/Janssen Award which is offered to a European general practitioner annually by Societas Internationalis Medicinæ Generalis (International Society of General Practice) in conjunction with Janssen Pharmaceuticals Limited.

The aim of the award is to stimulate research in general practice by helping to finance a particular project each year. The project should be completed within two years and should be of international interest. Selection will be by an expert international panel of general practitioners.

The value of the award will be £300, a further £200 being made available to the successful applicant towards travelling expenses to present the results of the work to a SIMG conference.

Applicants should write to SIMG Secretariat, Bahnhofstrasse 22 A—9020 Klagenfurt, Austria, before 1 October 1979.

## JOINT COMMITTEE ON POSTGRADUATE TRAINING FOR GENERAL PRACTICE

The Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice and the Royal College of General Practitioners have approved the vocational training scheme at Solihull.

The following schemes have been re-approved: Warwick and Leamington, Bury, Hamilton and East Kilbride, and Northumbria. These schemes are recognized by the Royal College of General Practitioners for the purpose of the MRCGP examination.

## ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

The Royal Society of Medicine is holding a postgraduate study course organized by its Section of General Practice from 15 to 19 October 1979 under the title, "New perspectives—third forum for general practitioners".

The topics will include: Rheumatology; The practice team; Caring for the retarded in the community; Hormone replacement therapy; Prescribing for depression and anxiety; The doctor and the law; Indications for surgery in coronary heart disease.

Further information can be obtained from the Conference Secretary, Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8AE.

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## COURSE FOR PRACTICE ADMINISTRATORS AND MANAGERS

Sir,  
The Midlands Faculty, reviewing its activities through the Faculty Board, felt there may be a vacuum in educational facilities for practice managers and administrators. Readers of the *Journal*

will be aware that with the evolution of group practice and the team approach those managing or administering practices have reached their posts by several routes—from business, local government, nursing, medical secretarial posts, hospital practice, or other backgrounds. Few have been specifically trained, and whereas colleges of further education train medical secretaries, and all grades

of ancillary staff are covered by the Association of Medical Secretaries, the Faculty Board felt there might be a place for experienced administrators and managers to meet, with a programme tailored to their specific needs.

To test the market, a one-day Section 63 Course was held on 10 April 1979, at which 20 practice administrators, each accompanied by a partner from their

practice, met to discuss the planning of a possible course. Mrs Christine Walsh, the training officer, described the courses run by the South-West Thames Regional Health Authority and Mr John Yates described those run by the Association of Practice Managers. Consultations had already been held with local medical committees, the Regional Adviser, and University Department of General Practice.

As a result of this encouraging one-day meeting, it was decided to mount in the autumn a year's experimental day release course, organized at the University of Birmingham's Health Centre Management Unit, in association with the West Midlands Regional Health Authority, through their personnel division.

This was a preliminary communication for three reasons: first, in case any West Midlands practice has not heard of this venture; secondly, because we suspect others in other faculties may have had more experience which we would like to know about; and thirdly, to offer an exchange of views with any other faculty starting along the same pathway.

ROBIN STEEL

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## UNWANTED PREGNANCY IN GENERAL PRACTICE

Sir,  
It is difficult to give a coherent answer to the letter by Dr Sheila Adam and Dr David Costain (May *Journal*, p. 312). As stated in my article (February *Journal*, p. 108), this was an abbreviated report on four years' work and therefore controls which were used in the original work were excluded from the article.

As to their second point: one can only say that this was the pattern of personality trait found by 11 experienced general practitioners during a period of four years.

Finally, I would emphasize that the work has been concerned with counselling women who came with a request for termination of pregnancy. It is not designed to increase nor decrease the provision of NHS abortion services. Nor does it make any judgement either way on the decision made. This surely must be up to the woman herself.

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

Sir,  
Our *Journal* provides a record of College activity and thought, and offers a wide choice of reading matter. In 1958 I supported the need for reliable, bias-free information reflecting wide ranging interests (Eimerl, 1958). Editorial policy can encourage this, but if contributors are unaware of important events happening outside the UK, the *Journal* may fall short in reporting wider issues which affect people generally and are directly relevant to the daily provision of primary care: for primary health care comprises much more than professional concern with diagnosis and treatment (DHSS, 1976).

Primary health care remains a front-runner in WHO activities, culminating in the huge international conference at Alma-Ata in September 1978. Regrettably our *Journal* remains silent on this though many nations have shown great interest in the event and the recommendations would surely have interested readers in view of the often stated aims of the College.

1979 is the International Year of the Child, yet as I write in mid-June our *Journal* is still silent. Do we no longer wish to hear about advances in child care, about practical life-saving measures which other countries are developing and which may apply in the UK also—such as the oral rehydration therapy packs?

Again, what do we know about the *Manual* intended to aid teachers of health workers or assess their performance as teachers? There is much international activity about this: we too could learn from WHO's experience of practical work applicable also in the UK. We are surely justified in expecting our *Journal* to give us information about this.

My letter can do no more than suggest; fuller reports can come from other readers. Younger readers especially are likely to benefit each other and their patients by looking beyond the boundary of the NHS to the wider world beyond. I do not criticize editorial policy; but, Sir, since you depend, as all editors do, on the quality and range of interests of your contributors, would we not all benefit by your readers—and potential contributors—being actively encouraged to take the wider view?

TEVIOT EIMERL

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## References

Department of Health and Social Security (1976). *Primary Health Care*. London: HMSO.

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Eimerl, T. S. (1958). On keeping up-to-date. *Journal of the College of General Practitioners*, 1, 176-180.

WHO (1977). Oral rehydration therapy. *WHO Chronicle*, 31, 87-93.

WHO (1978). The Alma-Ata Conference on Primary Health Care. *WHO Chronicle*, 32, 409-430.

WHO (1979). Health of the world's children. *WHO Chronicle*, 33, 119-127.

## PROFESSORS HUYGEN AND MEDALIE

Sir,  
May I draw your attention to a remarkable coincidence. In 1964 or 1965, I was present at the Annual General Meeting of the College in London and two of the three invited speakers on the "Art and Science of General Practice" were Drs F. J. H. Huygen from the Netherlands and Jack H. Medalie from Israel.

In the February 1979 issue of the *Journal* (p. 119, 120), there were reviews of Huygen's and Medalie's books on family medicine. Both reviews were enthusiastic. It says a great deal for Sir George Godber and Dr Harry Levitt to have invited these two people to represent their countries 15 years before they published their books.

JOHN HARVEY

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## 14/15 PRINCES GATE

Sir,  
Is no one else in the College embarrassed about the abysmal conference facilities at Princes Gate? I have recently attended several one-day meetings and have been made forcibly aware of the low standard of those facilities. For example, the upstairs room holds only 100 people in some discomfort and those at the back find it impossible to hear or see what is going on. The microphone and amplifying system is primitive and ineffective. The visual aids would not be accepted in the average postgraduate centre and the rather beautiful chandelier seems to be left permanently in the 'on' position.

The chairs are uncomfortable and in the late afternoon, just at the time when the meeting should be drawing conclu-