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## COLLEGE NEWS

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### ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

The Annual Symposium this year will be held on Friday, 16 November 1979, and as 1979 is the International Year of the Child the programme is being arranged on the theme of child care.

The College is fortunate in having obtained the Royal Geographical Society for the Symposium which is only a few minutes' walk from the College.

Those members interested in attending should apply to Miss Elizabeth Monk, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PU.

The Annual General Meeting is being held at Imperial College as in previous years on Saturday, 17 November 1979.

### ACCOMMODATION FOR CHILDREN

Council of the College has decided that for a trial period of one year two rooms will be made available to accommodate children aged between six and 12, when

accompanied by their parents, except during periods such as oral examinations, when all the accommodation is required for examiners.

The new arrangements took effect from 3 September 1979 and will be reviewed by the Council of the College at its meeting in September 1980.

### MRCGP EXAMINATION

The dates for the next MRCGP examinations are as follows:

#### *May/July 1980*

Written papers: Thursday, 15 May 1980. Orals: in Edinburgh during the week ending 29 June 1980 and in London during the week ending 5 July 1980.

Closing date: 20 March 1980.

#### *October/December 1980*

Written papers: Thursday, 30 October 1980. Orals: in Edinburgh and London during the week ending 13 December 1980.

Closing date: 4 September 1980.

The written papers will be held in London, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Cardiff, Belfast, and Dublin. These and other centres may be used as required, subject to a minimum (and in some centres a maximum) number of candidates. It may be necessary to limit the total numbers and candidates are therefore advised to apply well in advance of the closing dates.

The application fee is £50 and the reapplication fee £25. Application forms may be obtained from the Membership Secretary at the College.

### FUTURE COURSES

#### *September 1979*

7 to 9: Five Years on in Practice—Part 1  
16 to 21: Teaching and Counselling (across culture).

#### *October 1979*

15 to 19: Five Years on in Practice—Part 2.

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## MEDICAL NEWS

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### GENERAL PRACTITIONER TRAINING

The Council for Postgraduate Medical Education in England and Wales reports that by April 1979 the number of doctors known to be engaged in training for general practice totalled 1,994, excluding returns from two regions which were not then available.

The number of approved trainers has risen by four per cent to 1,693.

### 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 reapproved the vocational training schemes at Aylesbury and the Royal Free Hospital. These schemes are recognized by the Royal College of General

Practitioners for the purpose of the MRCGP examination.

### HEALTH CENTRES IN SCOTLAND

Mr Russell Fairgrive, MP, Minister for Health and Social Work in the Scottish Office, recently announced that there were 112 health centres in operation in Scotland, 23 being built, and a further 70 at various stages of planning. About a quarter of the population of Scotland is now served by general practitioners working from health centres.

### GRAVES MEDICAL AUDIOVISUAL LIBRARY

The Council of Management and the Honorary Medical Directors of the Graves Medical Audiovisual Library are

holding a Conference on "The Audiovisual Aids Library—Today and Tomorrow" on 1 November 1979 at the King's Fund Centre.

Enquiries and application should be made to Drs John and Valerie Graves, Graves Medical Audiovisual Library, Holly House, 220 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex.

#### *New royalties scheme*

To encourage more general practitioners to produce works of interest to their colleagues, especially those involved with vocational training, through the audiovisual medium of tape-slides, Graves Medical Audiovisual Library have instituted a scheme whereby royalties will be paid to authors.

The royalties will be calculated against the number of sales or loans of the author's tape-slide programme over every 12-month period.

Doctors who may need help in preparing a programme, or advice on script writing, are invited to discuss the matter with the Library Assistant Medical Director.

#### New titles

Four new titles have been issued:

Emergency plaster techniques—Dr T. Darby (Ref: VC25S). Laparoscopic techniques in gynaecology—Mr P. Steptoe (Ref: VC26S). Operative choledochoscopy—Mr B. S. Ashby (Ref: VC27S). Orthopaedic and neuro-surgical aspects of spina bifida occulta—Mr C. C. James (Ref: VC28S).

Details of existing and new titles can be obtained direct from the Graves Medical Audiovisual Library, Holly House, 220 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9BJ.

#### Open day

At the recent open day held by the Audiovisual Library there was great interest in the microfiche exhibit.

### UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO, CANADA

Dr C. B. Freer, MRCP, from the Department of Community Medicine, University of Glasgow, has completed a study programme, the first of its kind, designed by the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Ontario, Canada to provide organized higher training for those involved, or intending to be involved, in academic general practice.

This was a full-time degree programme and Dr Freer was the first person to complete the degree to become Master of Clinical Science (Family Medicine). The programme was supported by a Kellogg Foundation Fellowship.

Further information can be obtained from Professor I. R. McWhinney, Department of Family Medicine, University of Western Ontario, Canada.

### SEAT BELTS

The French Government has decided that French motorists in France must wear seat belts in towns at all times. It has also been decided that motorists must use dipped headlights in towns at night.

#### Reference

*Guardian* (1979). 12 July.

See *Letters to the Editor* (p. 623).

### LAMBETH, SOUTHWARK AND LEWISHAM AHA (TEACHING)

The Secretary of State for Social Services, Mr Patrick Jenkins, has issued a direction under the National Health Service Act 1977, the effect of which is to remove all powers from members of the Area Health Authority for Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham.

He will appoint commissioners to manage this authority, and in the meanwhile their functions will be exercised forthwith by the South-East Thames Regional Health Authority.

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The House of Representatives has now approved a total of \$45 million in federal funding for family practice education for the fiscal year 1980.

#### Reference

*AAFP Reporter* (1979). No. 8, p. 15.

### NINTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON GENERAL PRACTICE AND FAMILY MEDICINE

The American Academy of Family Medicine will be hosts for the Ninth World Conference to be held in New Orleans from 5 to 9 October 1980 and once again the Royal College of General Practitioners is arranging group travel for those who are interested. The meeting will coincide with the Annual Convention of the American Academy.

In addition, the travel agents (VIP Travel Ltd, 42 North Audley Street, London W1) will be happy to arrange visits to other parts of the United States for those who wish to extend their stay.

Because of the present favourable exchange rate for the £, it has been possible to bring down the price for the return air journey, plus 7 nights at the conference hotel (bed only), to less than £450 per person. As this is an educational exercise, those who are going might wish to discuss with their accountant the possibility of charging this as an expense for tax purposes.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### WOMEN GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Sir,  
Your editorial on women general practitioners (April *Journal*, p. 195) quotes Stevens (1978) as having described the "nurturative female mentality" and "aggressive male instrumentality" and it suggested that this may fit women and men for different professional roles.

I write on behalf of one of my patients to claim her academic priority! In her pioneering studies on women scientists, Burrage (1973) drew attention to the fact that amongst graduates at that time 25 per cent of doctors were women but only seven per cent of scientists, despite the higher academic stan-

dard required for entry to medical school. Even more telling, she found that a significant number of women scientists had turned to the natural sciences only after abandoning an original intention to enter the medical or paramedical professions. Her studies demonstrated important demographic differences between women scientists and women in the population at large, and linking her own findings with Parsons and Shils' (1951) description of instrumental and nurturative orientations, she advanced the hypothesis that the nurturative role, largely culturally imposed upon women, was one of the factors that had led them to turn to medicine rather than science. Her research on this subject occurred at a time

when Kelly (1974), in a review article, could say: "Very little research has been directly concerned with . . . the factors which dissuade women from science. Indeed only two completely relevant recent studies have come to hand—Seear *et al.* (1964), and Burrage." Kelly's later review (1976) is also essential reading for anyone interested in this topic.

Interestingly, Leeson and Gray (1978) point out that the preference of women for medicine rather than science is also present in the socialist countries, where there are more women scientists, but even more women doctors.

The fact that Burrage did not follow up her work is in itself an indication of the way in which our society wastes female talent. Had Hilary Burrage been