Medical News

and the number has been decreasing steadily during the past 20 years.

Salaried assistants
The number of salaried assistants fell to less than 400 in 1978.

Trainees
The number of trainees increased by about 14 percent to 1,280 in 1978.

Reference
Family Practitioner Services (1979). Number of general medical practitioners. 6, 189.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY GROUP OF GREAT BRITAIN

The Muscular Dystrophy Group of Great Britain and the Welsh National School of Medicine are holding a conference on the management of muscular dystrophy at the Welsh National School of Medicine, University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, on Friday, 21 March 1980. Further details can be obtained from: The Muscular Dystrophy Group, Nattrass House, 35 Macaulay Road, London SW4 OQP (tel: 01 720 8055).

WINNICOTT FUND CONFERENCE

The Winnicott Fund is holding its fifth conference, "Can Human Relationships Survive in Education", on Friday, 21 March 1980, at Bedford College, Regent's Park, London. The chairman of the Conference will be Dr Martin James and speakers will include Mary Waddington, MA, PH.D and Lydia James, PSW.

Further details can be obtained from Mrs Joyce Coles, 1 Anne Mount, 44 Madeley Road, Ealing, London W5 2LU.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING

An international meeting organized by the British Association of Immediate Care Schemes, the Centre for Emergency Medicine, Pittsburgh, and the British Association of Emergency Technicians is to be held in Brighton from 22 to 25 October 1980.

Further information may be obtained from the British Association of Immediate Care Schemes, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU.

EMERGENCIES IN GENERAL PRACTICE

A course on emergencies in general practice is being held at the Postgraduate Medical Centre, Ashton Road, Lancaster, on Saturday and Sunday, 15 and 16 March 1980. Details can be obtained from the Dean of Postgraduate Medical Studies, Gateway House, Piccadilly, Manchester, M60 7LP.

CORRECTION

In the November 1979 issue of the Journal, Dr A. J. Mary Chisham was described as Chairman of the London Association of Medical Women's Federation. She should have appeared as Chairman of the Esher and Epsom Subgroup of the London Association of Medical Women's Federation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DR LINDSEY BATTEN AT 90

Sir,

This is the first time that the audience at a James Mackenzie Lecture rose to its feet was when Lindsey Batten gave his in 1960. For style it was a tour de force which has been rivalled only in very recent years. But it had particular qualities that we are unlikely to witness again. Lindsey has a remarkable knowledge of literature, including Latin and Greek. He has retained his remarkable ability to quote.

It is 17 years since he retired from practice in Hampstead and from being the second Provost of the North London Faculty (Lord Stephen Taylor having been the first). His standards of practice were austere—I suspect that he was nearly always on call. If he has a special interest it is in children; for a long time he practised partly as an assistant physician at the East London Hospital for Children in Shadwell, after being a Chief Assistant in the Department for Diseases of Children at St Bartholomew's Hospital.

Perhaps this note will encourage people to read again not only Lindsey's Mackenzie Lecture (Batten, 1961) but also the lecture called "The Essence of Good Practice" (Batten, 1956) which he gave to medical students at St Bartholomew's Hospital; and, of course, to offer our congratulations and good wishes to him and his family.

JOHN HORDER
Kentish Town Health Centre
2 Bartholomew Road
London NW5 2AJ.

References

SCREENING FOR HYPERTENSION

Sir,

Perhaps the most worrying problem in screening for hypertension is that it labels some people as hypertensive and therefore sick. This must inevitably change their whole view of themselves. Haynes and colleagues (1978) have shown that merely labelling people as hypertensive increases their absentee rate considerably. This is the sort of evidence which it is easy to overlook but of which we should be increasingly aware.

P. R. V. TOMSON
The Group Surgery
Vine House
87 High Street
Abbots Langley
Hertfordshire WD5 0AL.

Reference

GENERAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE FOR HOSPITAL SPECIALISTS

Sir,

The Hertfordshire Local Medical Committee was delighted to hear that at the Annual Meeting of the Royal College of General Practitioners a motion was passed, without any votes against, that the Council of the Royal College should examine ways in which those wishing to become hospital specialists could gain experience in general practice during their postgraduate training.

The Council of the Royal College will be aware that at the Annual Representative Meeting of the British Medical Association in Glasgow in 1977, Hertfordshire LMC proposed the motion that all future specialist training programmes should include six months' experience in general practice under the supervision of a general practitioner.