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MEDICAL NEWS

SOCIETY OF ADMINISTRATORS OF FAMILY PRACTITIONER SERVICES

Mr S. Edwardson, LL.B, DPA, FHA, has been elected President of the Society of Administrators of Family Practitioner Services.

COMPULSORY TRAINING FOR GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Regulations making it compulsory for all doctors entering general practice to undertake vocational training were laid before Parliament on 18 December 1979. From 16 February 1981 a doctor wishing to provide the full range of medical services under the National Health Service will need to have obtained a certificate of prescribed or equivalent experience. The Regulations follow full consultation with the medical profession and other interested organizations.

The Regulations provide for implementation in two stages. From 16 February 1981 until 15 August 1982 the prescribed medical experience will be 12 months as a trainee general practitioner. From 16 August 1982 the prescribed experience will be three years' training consisting of at least 12 months as a trainee general practitioner; two periods of at least six months in educationally approved training posts drawn from a specified list of hospital specialties; and the remainder in educationally approved posts in a hospital specialty or community medicine. There is also provision for the experience to be acquired part time. Preregistration experience will not count towards the prescribed experience.

General practitioners already providing such services on 15 February 1981 will be exempt from the requirements to have obtained a certificate, and provision is made for certain other exemptions. Doctors who have provided such service in the past but whose names are

not included in a medical list on 15 February 1981 will be exempt provided that they return to general practice within nine years.

The Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice has been designated by the Secretary of State as the body responsible for issuing certificates under the Regulations.

Reference

National Health Service (Vocational Training) Regulations (1979). Statutory Instrument No. 1644. NHS Act 1977, Sections 30, 31, and 32. London: HMSO.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BORDERLINE SUBSTANCES

The Advisory Committee of Borderline Substances comprises the following members:

Professor Barbara Clayton (Chairman), Professor of Chemical Pathology and Human Metabolism, University of Southampton; Mr C. Blythe, General Practice Pharmacist, Lanarkshire, Scotland; Miss D. Francis, Group Chief Dietitian, Hospitals for Sick Children, London; Dr R. B. Godwin-Austen, Consultant Neurologist, General Hospital, Nottingham; Professor H. A. Lee, Professor of Metabolic Medicine, University of Southampton; Professor J. Lloyd, Department of Child Health, St George's Hospital Medical School, University of London; Dr E. L. Rhodes, Consultant Dermatologist, Kingston Hospital, Kingston-upon-Thames, and St Helier Hospital, Carshalton; Dr D. M. Watkins, General Practitioner, South Glamorgan; and Dr D. M. Wilks, General Practitioner, London.

The Committee offers independent professional advice to both the medical profession and the Health Departments on whether certain 'borderline' preparations should properly be regarded as drugs and hence be accepted as a charge on the National Health Service if prescribed by a family doctor. Under the NHS Act, a family doctor may prescribe

only drugs, medicines, and certain appliances at NHS expense.

It is open to doctors whether, for example, as individuals or as members of medical service committees to manufacturers or to the Health Departments, to request the Committee to consider any substance or product. Those who so approach the Committee are asked to provide evidence in support of the contention that a product should be regarded as a drug. The Committee is always ready to reconsider any of its decisions in the light of new evidence. Any approach to the Committee should be made through the Secretary at Hannibal House, Elephant and Castle, London SE1.

GENERAL PRACTITIONER AND SOCIAL WORKER WORKSHOP

A meeting of the General Practitioner and Social Worker Workshop will be held at Owens Park, University of Manchester from 28 to 30 March 1980. The title will be: "I can't do without it doctor"—dependence on alcohol and prescribed drugs. Further details can be obtained from Miss H. J. Scott, 42 Binley Close, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 2RB.

CORRECTIONS: JANUARY ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL

In the January 1980 issue of the *Journal* colour was omitted from the figures in Dr Clifford Kay's James Mackenzie Lecture 1979. This had a particularly unfortunate effect on Figure 6, which is being reprinted in this issue (page 160).

The leaflet for the Spring General Meeting of the Royal College of General Practitioners was also omitted from the January issue through no fault of the North of England Faculty or the Cumbria Subfaculty. It was distributed with the February issue.

Both these errors are greatly regretted.

BASICS

BASICS (British Association for Immediate Care) exists in order to bring together those involved in providing immediate medical care, both doctors and laymen. Its aims are to foster co-operation and to improve standards. The Association of Emergency Medical Technicians is affiliated to BASICS.

Membership is now open to individuals and is not confined only to those participating in Immediate Care Schemes. Full membership is offered to registered medical practitioners, associate membership to non-doctors.

Applications for membership can be obtained from: The Administrative Secretary, BASICS, 14 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PU (tel: 01-589 1574).

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 scheme at Ealing and reappraised the schemes at Bolton Lister Hospital and St George's Hospital, Tooting. These schemes are recognized by the Royal College of General Practitioners for the purpose of the MRCPG examination.

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

On 26 November 1979 the current membership of the British Medical Association was 65,004, home membership was 54,642, and overseas membership 10,362. The 1978 figure was 65,046.

Reference

British Medical Journal (1979). 2, 1522.

PREREGISTRATION POSTS

New regulations for the preregistration year came into force on 1 December 1979. Obstetric posts will no longer be acceptable as part of the requirement in either medicine or surgery, but up to four months in a health centre will be recognized in either of these categories.

Reference

British Medical Journal (1979). News and notes. 2, 1594.

CENTRAL HEALTH AND PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCILS

The Department of Health and Social Security and the Welsh Office have decided to wind up the Central Health

Services Council and the Personal Social Services Council. It is estimated that savings will be between £25,000 and £200,000 a year.

WONCA

Bylaws of the World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians make allowance for direct membership by any medical practitioner whether a member of a member organization or not.

Direct members receive copies of *WONCA News*, which is published quarterly, and develop a closer personal liaison with the World Organization.

Applications for membership may be made to Dr David A. Game, Honorary Secretary/Treasurer, WONCA, 50 Lambert Road, Royston Park, South Australia 5070, Australia, and the annual subscription is \$20 (Australian).

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON GENERAL PRACTICE

The 27th International Congress on General Practice will be held at Klagenfurt, Austria, from 15 to 20 September 1980. The topics will include crisis intervention, general practice and the child, genetics, results of research work in general practice, solving sexual problems, and self-help groups. Further information and applications can be obtained from the General Secretary of the SIMG, Mrs Sigrid Taupe, A-9020 Klagenfurt, Bahnhofstrasse 22, Austria.

GRAVES MEDICAL AUDIOVISUAL LIBRARY

The videocassette library now includes a series of tapes made in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Birmingham. They demonstrate actual cases such as suicide, psychiatric examination of a school child, and the unco-operative patient. A complete list including new additions is available from Graves Medical Audiovisual Library, Holly House, 220 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9BJ. Tel: Chelmsford 0245-83351.

MARIE CURIE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

The Annual General Meeting of the Marie Curie Memorial Foundation was held on 11 December 1979 and the Chairman of Council, Mr Ronald Raven, reported another year of progress and dedication to the welfare of those suffering from cancer. The Foundation's finances had improved greatly

during the year and considerable progress had been made in reducing the indebtedness of the Foundation. Nevertheless, the Foundation still had an outstanding liability of approaching £½ million but had managed to maintain in full measure all its services. These include 11 residential nursing homes, nationwide domiciliary night nursing, a welfare service, an enquiry education bureau, and a research department orientated towards patient care.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING

At the Annual General Meeting of the Royal College of Nursing a resolution that the College should seek affiliation to the Trade Union Congress was lost by 2,849 votes to 3,742.

As a major change in policy the resolution would have needed a two thirds majority to have been successful.

The Royal College of Nursing was founded in 1916, incorporated by Royal Charter in 1928, and certificated as an independent trade union in 1977. It currently has 150,000 members.

NUMBER OF ALCOHOLICS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Sir George Young, Parliamentary Secretary, Health and Personal Social Services, has indicated that the latest estimates for the number of alcoholics known in the United Kingdom are as follows:

1957: 490,000.
1967: 540,000.
1977: 740,000.

DEATHS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

In 1977 the total number of deaths in England and Wales decreased by 3.8 per cent from 1976 and was the lowest figure since 1971. The crude death rate fell to 11.7 per thousand.

Circulatory diseases accounted for just over half of all deaths including ischaemic heart disease (27 per cent) and cerebrovascular disease (13 per cent). Various forms of cancer constituted the second largest group (22 per cent), of which cancer of the trachea, lung, and bronchus was the most common.

Child death rates fell between 1976 and 1977 as follows: the rates for stillbirths, perinatal, and infant mortality all decreased between 1976 and 1977, stillbirths from 10 per thousand total births to nine, perinatal mortality from 17.7 to 17.0, and infant mortality from 14.3 per thousand live births to 13.8.

Reference

Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (1979). *Mortality Statistics 1977*. London: HMSO.