

of television in teaching by university and regional adviser staff (the survey results are to be published in *The Journal of Audiovisual Media in Medicine*).

Dr Peter Maguire, Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry, University of Manchester, opened the first full day of the conference with a paper called 'Deficiencies in skills in communicating with patients'. He outlined evidence suggesting that medical students and doctors often lack communication skills and that these deficiencies affect the outcome of care. He emphasized the importance of direct observation and analysis of consulting performance followed by feedback, systematic practice and discussion, and challenged us to find effective ways of doing this in general practice. His talk was followed by group discussions on teaching aims.

In the afternoon Professor Arnold Morrison, Department of Education, University of Stirling, stressed the importance of developing teaching methods which would not only influence attitudes but change behaviour. Talking mainly about postgraduate training, he outlined a model for professional training which emphasized the need for variety in approach and allowed training methods to match the needs of individual trainees. The group discussions which followed were on teaching methods.

The greater part of the second day was devoted to review of videotaped material submitted by delegates. Each small group was provided with replay equipment and asked to review and discuss three tapes. In the report back session each group selected a short excerpt to demonstrate a point to the full conference. Delegates thus saw a wide range of materials, but time was too short for detailed discussion. Although on this occasion it was felt that preselecting tapes would have discouraged people from exchanging material, it was thought that at future conferences it would be better to concentrate on a few well-chosen tapes.

Introducing the final session on television techniques, Mr James Woodward-Nutt, Senior Engineer, Aberdeen University Television Service, gave a light-hearted but informative talk on selecting equipment and discussed the technical difficulties which may arise when using simple equipment to televise consultations.

### Group discussions

It is difficult to summarize the discussions which took place within the five small groups. Because the direction of the discussions was left for each leader to decide, the groups tended to cover rather different ground. In retrospect, a minority of delegates felt that there was insufficient direction and consequently a lack of definable achievement, although most agreed that the conference achieved its aim of reflecting critically on our current use of television in teaching.

Variation in the experience and interests of delegates created problems. For example, those who had more recently started using television, those who were largely interested in seeing what other people had produced, and the smaller number who had more extensive experience and who wanted to discuss their use of television to date, all had different contributions and different interests. Another distinction could be made between those who were largely interested in simulation and role-play and those who were primarily interested in capturing 'real' consultations on videotape.

### Conclusions

Delegates enjoyed the conference, but most felt that there was now a need for more specific discussion. There are parallels here with the consultation itself. Just as it is best to uncover a patient's problems by adopting an open and relatively unstructured initial approach, so this conference has identified some of the problem areas of television teaching.

R. J. TAYLOR  
*Conference Organizer*

### Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Messrs. Smith, Kline and French Laboratories, who helped with the administrative costs of the conference, and to Messrs. Winthrop Laboratories, ICI (Pharmaceutical Division), Syntex Laboratories Ltd and Cameron Video Systems (Glasgow) who gave generous financial support.

I am especially grateful to Mrs Jill Bridges, who gave invaluable help as Conference Secretary, and to Mr Alan Grimley, Director, Aberdeen University Television Service, and his staff.

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## OBITUARY

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### Edith, Lady Wolfson, Hon. FRCGP

EDITH Specterman was born in London in 1907 and died on 7 January 1981. At the age of 20 she married Isaac Wolfson and by her support helped him build his business empire. She was actively involved in much of his charitable work in the fields of medicine, education and religion. Though she herself rarely took

the limelight, her advice was sought and gladly given on many occasions. In particular, she was extremely helpful to the Royal College of General Practitioners when the Wolfson Foundation first considered awarding travelling fellowships to members of our College. She was particularly thrilled to receive our Honorary Fellowship during our Jubilee Year and had the honour of receiving the diploma from His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh.