

THE COLLEGE DIVISIONS

The Research Division

THE Research Division has the general responsibility for exploiting the unique facility for research inherent in the organization of primary care in the UK. It is worth restating three major advantages. First, general practitioners hold a virtually complete record of the provision of medical care to every patient by any part of the National Health Service. Secondly, that single record remains in operation throughout the person's life. Thirdly, because of the registration system, general practitioners can define the population for whom they are responsible for medical care, and this provides the basis for epidemiological studies.

Thus, research has always featured more prominently in the activities of our College than in the other Colleges, though some are now beginning to follow our example.

College Research Units

The College has six research units whose directors were all members of the old Research Division Executive. Because the new Executive will have much wider responsibilities, the co-ordination of the units' activities will now be effected through a new Directors' Committee, separate from the Executive. In addition, the directors will provide a written report of their activities for each Executive meeting. The College research units provide the necessary administrative structure through which the College can operate nationwide multi-observer projects.

Departments of General Practice and College Faculties

University Departments of General Practice have a responsibility for undertaking research, and the Division wishes to facilitate this activity in

every appropriate way. Most College faculties have research committees, and the Division will wish to encourage and promote research at faculty level.

General Practitioners

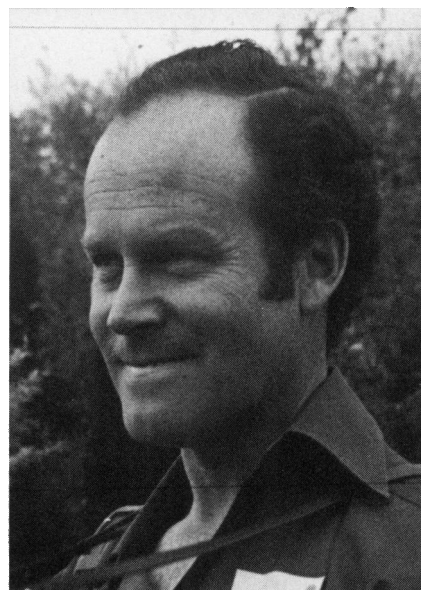
Few general practitioners have had formal training in research, and the Division will continue to provide advice on specific projects with the help of many experts throughout the UK. There is no doubt that much more formal training is needed and, as a result of the College Appeal, two full-time research training fellowships have so far been set up. However, responsibility for the promotion of education in research methods has, for administrative convenience, been incorporated within the Education Division.

Medicines Surveillance Centre

In order to implement the new policy of investigating drug efficacy and side-effects in general practice, the College has set up a limited company—the Medicines Surveillance Centre Ltd (MSC). MSC will undertake drug trials and post-marketing surveillance when commissioned by pharmaceutical companies or government bodies from the UK or overseas. The College will countenance no research which does not incorporate the highest ethical standards. In order to ensure that these standards are met, an independent Clinical Trials Ethical Committee has been established under the distinguished chairmanship of Sir Eric Scowen, and every project promoted by the College must first receive the approval of this committee.

Computers

Responsibility for the methods whereby computers can be introduced into primary care will primarily be with the Division. Recommendations for policy are now being determined by a Computer Policy Group which is jointly



Dr C. R. Kay, Chairman of the Research Division

sponsored by the GMSC of the BMA, and the College. Both bodies have now accepted the recommendations of the group for a massive programme of research and development that will be required, and the implementation will be a major responsibility for the Research Division.

Funding

At the same time, the Division is attempting to define for the College other areas of research to which priority should be given. It is unfortunate that at a time when a major expansion of research activity can be justified we should be constrained by a serious shortage of funding. The Scientific Foundation Board which administers funds allocated from Appeal monies for the purpose of encouraging research (including research into educational methods) can make only a modest contribution in this respect. It can help to maintain the College research structure, to fund small projects in their entirety, and finance pilot studies to the stage at which they can be more appropriately presented to other funding organisations with more substantial resources.

cy and post-partum psychological disturbance. Preference will be given to research reports, but critical reviews and question-raising papers will also be considered.

Offers of papers should be sent to C. J. G. Macy, Acting Secretary, SRNP, c/o South Lincolnshire Dept of Psychology, Orchard House, South Rauceby, Sleaford, Lincs., from whom details of membership and of the conference may also be obtained.

MEDICAL NEWS

Meetings and Courses

Society for Reproductive and Neonatal Psychology

The Society for Reproductive and Neonatal Psychology will hold a con-

ference at the University of York 27-28 September 1982.

Papers are invited related to psychological aspects of fertility and infertility, pregnancy, childbirth, early mother-child relationships, early infant-

Epidemiology for General Practitioners

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 5-9 July. Further details from Dr John Ashton, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, (Gower Street), London WC1E 7HT.

One-Day Course on the MRCPG Examination

Hallwood Health Centre, Runcorn, Cheshire, Sunday 3 October 1982, 09.00-16.30. For trainees and young principals. This course in preparation for the examination is held twice yearly. Recognized under section 63. Numbers are limited to 35 participants. Enquiries should be addressed to Dr B. W. McGuinness, Course Chairman, Weaver Vale Practice, Hallwood Health Centre, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2UT.

A New Hospice for London

The North London Hospice Group, chaired by Dr Christopher Hindley, MRCPG, has been formed with the intention of establishing a hospice in North London, covering Haringey, Barnet and North Camden. The Service will be free and the organizers are looking for financial support not only from the National Health Service but from the community. Further information is available from North London Hospice Group, PO Box 379, London NW3 1NJ. Phone: 01-794 8647.

Computer Holiday Camps

The University of Southampton, feeling that it is no bad thing to combine learning with leisure, are organizing week-long holidays for people to learn about computers. Anyone can go, and several kinds of micro-computers, with tuition and demonstrations, will be on offer. If there is demand, programmes designed especially for general practitioners will be provided. The cost per week will be £115.00 (self catering) or £165.00 (part board) and the holidays will run from July to September. Details from Dr Lionel Wardle, 37 University Road, Highfield, Southampton SO2 1TL. Telephone (0703) 558621.

EEC Health and Social Security Protection

Self-employed people and their families from Britain who fall ill in EEC countries are to receive medical treatment on the same basis as employed workers. The change comes into effect on 1 July 1982.

A Healthy Pregnancy



The Health Education Council's latest campaign aims to encourage good health in pregnancy, and it has produced a large package (illustrated here) full of information for pregnant mothers. Copies of the package are available from the Health Education Guide to Health Pregnancy, PO Box 411, London SE99 6YE.

Master of Health Services in Primary Health Care

There are few postgraduate courses in the UK suitable for GPs and leading to a higher degree. We therefore draw to our readers' attention a course 6,000 miles away in California which aims to "provide an educational pathway for health professionals who wish to develop the skills to act as community and professional leaders in meeting health care needs". The course is available full-time for a year or part-time for two years, and applications should be addressed to MHS/PHC Programme Director, c/o Department of Family Practice, Primary Care Centre, Room 2107, 2221 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento, California 95817, USA.

BBC Health Education Programmes

Dealing with Drink. Thursday 17 June, 11 p.m. Radio 4 VHF. Seven programmes on the nature of alcohol and its effects on the individual and society. The BBC book, *Dealing with Drink*, by Dr Duncan Raistrick, is based on the programmes. Price £4.25.

Arterial Disease

The Chest, Heart and Stroke Association has awarded a grant of £41,000 to Drs Muir Gray and Godfrey Fowler. They are studying the implementation of the College's recommendations on preventing arterial disease in general practice. The project is for three years, and will be carried out in a group of Oxfordshire general practices.

Community Nurses

In 1979 the OPCS began a survey of nurses working in the community. Preliminary results are now available and information has been sent to a contact nurse (usually the District Nursing Officer) in each district that was researched. The organizer of this survey, Karen Dunnell, has informed us that the figures can be examined in these districts by anyone interested.

People in the News

Mr Robert N. Thomson has been appointed Executive Director of The Royal Society of Medicine from 30 September 1982.

Dr Julian Tudor Hart of Glyncorrwg, West Glamorgan, has been elected a Member of the Royal College of Physicians of London without examination, and also elected to the Scientific Council on Epidemiology and Prevention of the International Society and Federation of Cardiology.

Dr Hugh Savill, a trainee in Camden, has been awarded a Churchill Travelling Fellowship to study terminal care facilities in Canada and the USA.

Nigeria

The Faculty of General Medical Practice of Nigeria now has 145 Foundation Fellows, all appointed from a number who have ten years' experience as doctors, with at least five in general practice. In future, entry will be by examination only, and the Faculty Board of sixteen members (Chairman, Dr S. E. A. Andem Ewa) is applying to the Senate of the National Medical College for permission to appoint a full-time director of studies. This doctor will supervise training and Part I of the membership examination.

Josie Bradbury Travel Award

The Psoriasis Association, which was founded in 1968, is an extremely active self-help organization providing support and mutual aid for sufferers. Its founding secretary, Josephine Bradbury, died in 1974, and in memory of her name the Association has made available monies which will be paid towards expenses incurred by doctors, research scientists, nurses, social workers or members of any other professions relevant to the understanding and treatment of psoriasis. The total sum available in any one year will not exceed £600. Application forms and further details can be obtained from the Secretary, The Psoriasis Association, 7 Milton Street, Northampton NN2 7JC.