

examination. Candidates are asked to submit an essay on a subject relevant to the practice of medicine in the community. This may take the form of an account of a clinical, epidemiological or practice organization study associated with general practice, or a case report of patients seen in general practice. Particulars of entry and application forms can be obtained from the Secretary, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU. The closing date is 31 May 1983.

Consequences of Unemployment

There has been growing concern among members of the medical profession about the possible effects on health of rising unemployment. The Research Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists has been exploring the possibility of encouraging further research into this. In the belief that general practitioners see more of those affected more frequently than psychiatrists, the Research Committee invited representatives of the Research Division of the College to take part in a small symposium. This was held at the Royal College of Psychiatrists on 15 October 1982.

After an introduction by Professor Andrew Sims (Chairman of the Research Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists), Dr Sheila Mann (Secretary of the Research Committee) reviewed previous work in this field. Professor David Metcalfe (Department of General Practice, University of Manchester) then described his large study of urban primary care. Although this

had not been designed to look at unemployment, Professor Metcalfe presented some preliminary findings about the consultation patterns of the unemployed.

The difficulties of undertaking research in this field were acknowledged in the discussion that followed. Nevertheless, there was agreement that research was needed and enthusiasm for exploring how it might be done. A joint working group of the two Colleges has been formed to examine the feasibility of research into the health and social consequences of unemployment.

The working group is aware of the many initiatives in this area in recent months. As there is no central pool of information about these, the group would be pleased to hear from College members who are undertaking (or have undertaken) work on this topic, or who know of other recent initiatives or who have other suggestions for work related to this. Such comments should be sent to Miss Anne Murray, RCGP Research Division, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU.

Scientific Foundation Board

The Scientific Foundation Board administers the monies available to the College for disposal on research projects by general practitioners. In addition to the funds generally available it has some funds which are limited to research into specific conditions. Money is currently available for general practitioner research into diabetes, and other smaller amounts for research into migraine and malignant disease. The Board would welcome applications for grants for worthwhile projects

in these or other research areas relevant to general practice.

A booklet is available from the Hon. Secretary of the Scientific Foundation Board, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU describing the method of application.

John Hasler

John Hasler, Honorary Secretary to Council, recently has been awarded the degree of MD by the University of London for his thesis, "A Study of Trainee Clinical Experience in General Practice."

Spring Meeting 1983

This year's Spring Meeting has been organized by the Thames Valley Faculty and will take place in Oxford between April 8 and 10.

The theme for the academic programme will be "Aspects of Preventive Care" and two programmes will run concurrently on Saturday 9 April. The Spring General Meeting of the College will be held on Sunday 10 April and the William Pickles Lecture will be delivered by Professor John Walker from the Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Newcastle.

The Thames Valley Faculty have organized comprehensive social and families' programmes and early booking for these is advisable. Further details of the Spring Meeting can be obtained from RCGP Oxford '83 Spring Meeting, Windrush Health Centre, Witney, Oxfordshire OX8 7HS.

MEDICAL NEWS

Association of University Teachers of General Practice

George Freeman of Southampton sends us this account of the Annual Scientific Meeting, 8-10 July 1982:

The Division of General Practice at Leeds University were our hosts for this meeting. The programme was full, with 08.30 starts and functions on both evenings.

The theme for the first afternoon was behaviour in practice, and led up to a paper dealing with the emotive topic of single-handed inner city general practice; discussion here was heat-

ed and prolonged. The second day began with a review of the Principles of Educational Assessment from R. Ebel (Michigan). This was well prepared and delivered and was memorable for its superb account of how to assess the various ways of doing this. Other papers on assessment followed, covering cognitive abilities, clinical competence, the affective domain (J. Ross, Newfoundland) and oral examination (K. Hodgkin, Great Ayton). Later in the day one group of participants was able to observe a live oral test of Leeds medical students after their general practice attachment and was able to

obtain and exchange views on the teaching of consultation skills to undergraduates.

The presentation of research papers on the Friday afternoon gave us one of the best sessions of any Scientific Meeting of the Association—not because every paper was necessarily the acme of perfection, but the variety, the liveliness, the presentation, the chairmanship and the quality of discussion were all noteworthy. Starting with benzodiazepines, the subjects ranged through alcoholism and upper respiratory illness to investigations, and finished with acupuncture.

Two more outside speakers opened the third day. Anne Cartwright posed some hard questions arising from her own recent work and Dr B. B. Gent of Leeds Polytechnic gave a generalist's thoughts on professional education and training. During the final afternoon a further series of papers began with preregistration house physicians in general practice and closed on a firmly clinical note assessing the quality of care for asthma.

This meeting contained much of interest, particularly in the contributions from outside. At the same time the members' own presentations suggested a steady increase in research activity within the Association. This welcome development may limit the time available for visitors in the future but hopefully one session can be retained for them.

Helping Disabled People Help Themselves

A major new project designed to collect information about tests on aids and equipment for people with disabilities is now being undertaken by the Research Institute for Consumer Affairs (RICA). This is a charitable trust and a sister organization of the Consumers' Association. Research for the project will be completed by the autumn. RICA is consulting professional and social workers, manufacturers, organizations for and of the disabled and people with disabilities themselves. They would be very pleased to hear from anyone with ideas both about what information is needed and how it might be communicated. Those interested should write to David Yelding, 14 Buckingham Street, London WC2N 6DS.

Misuse of Drugs

"Treatment and Rehabilitation: Report of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs" was published last December. This makes recommendations for strengthening and developing the treatment and rehabilitation services currently provided for drug misusers. The report emphasizes the changing nature and growing problem of drug misuse, and shows its effect on individuals, their relatives and friends, and on the work of health and social services agencies. Recommendations are made for the establishment of regional drug problem teams and of drug advisory committees in each district.

In responding to the publication of the report Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, stated that he believes it important to look in

detail at the role of doctors in the treatment of drug misuse and at prescribing patterns. He stated that there was a need to reduce the supply of damaging drugs and to ensure treatment and rehabilitation for those who have suffered harm through drug misuse.

The report is available from HMSO, price £3.95.

JCPT Secretaries

At its meeting on 28 October 1982 the Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice appointed Drs S. E. Josse and M. McKendrick as Honorary Joint Secretaries to succeed Drs J. D. J. Havard and D. H. Irvine who had been Honorary Joint Secretaries since the formation of the Committee in 1976. Dr Donald, Chairman of the Joint Committee, paid tribute to the tremendous contribution made by the previous Honorary Joint Secretaries, to which the Committee responded by giving them a standing ovation.

Dr Donald reviewed the successful steps that had led the Committee to its present position following the introduction of full mandatory vocational training in August of last year. Under the first phase of the Regulations, 4,454 certificates have been issued by the Committee to enable doctors to become principals in general practice under the National Health Service. Of these, 4,147 were for prescribed experience. About nine hundred doctors applied for certificates of equivalent experience and 307 were granted certificates. Forty-one doctors appealed against the Committee's decision not to grant a certificate, leading to 21 hearings before the Appeal Body. Five of these were successful.

Self Help and the Patient

The Patients' Association has published the 8th edition of its directory of national organizations concerned with various diseases and handicaps. This contains addresses, telephone numbers and brief particulars of the functions of over 170 organizations. The directory can be obtained from the Patients' Association, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BN. (Tel: 01 222-4992) The price is £1.75 post free.

Disability Rights Handbook

The Disability Rights Handbook is a comprehensive source of advice and information for disabled people and their advisers. It outlines the benefits and services available to people with

disabilities, and describes what they might be entitled to. Over six hundred organizations of and for people with disabilities are listed in the book. The 1983 Disability Rights Handbook costs £1.80 including postage and is available from the Disability Alliance, 21 Star Street, London W2 1QB. (Tel: 01 402-7026)

"The Tender Foot Kit"

The Disabled Living Foundation has produced a training package to help different professionals who may be asked for advice on footwear and foot care. The material includes a set of slides and notes for lecture demonstrations, samples of all the readymade orthopaedic footwear that is available and examples of footwear adaptations for common problems. The whole kit is contained in two large holdalls and can be hired from Mrs E. M. Turnbull MCSP, The Disabled Living Foundation, 346 Kensington High Street, London W14 8NS. (Tel: 01 602-2491)

Prevention of War

The Proceedings of the Medical Association for the Prevention of War has so much expanded in content as to become the *Journal* of the Association. It appears twice-yearly, presenting medical concern on nuclear war, non-nuclear war and other social violence. The price is 75p which should be sent to Dr Jeffrey Segal, 308 Cricklewood Lane, London NW2 2PX.

Vocational Training

The fourth edition of this booklet gives details of over two hundred three-year vocational training schemes in general practice in England and Wales providing nearly nine hundred places for doctors training for general practice. The booklet lists the schemes by region and provides for each scheme the name and address of the organizer, the number of places available each year, the months in which entrants start and the posts in the rotation. In many schemes details of accommodation, half-day release courses and posts recognized for higher diplomas are included. The schemes are designed to satisfy the requirements of the NHS (Vocational Training) Regulations 1979, and for entry to the examination for College membership. Copies of the booklet may be obtained from the Council for Postgraduate Medical Education in England and Wales, 7 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5HH, price £2.70 (including postage and packing).