
CONFERENCE REPORT

Assessment and Preparation for Work

Last October the College of Occupational Therapists organized a one-day conference on assessment and preparation for work, under the sponsorship of the DHSS. The College's representative on that occasion was Dr Janet Heyes from Liverpool, who felt that the following matters had particular relevance to general practice:

1. There is underuse by general practitioners of the facilities available for work rehabilitation.
2. Only 2 per cent of admissions to Employment Rehabilitation Centres are as a result of a specific referral from a general practitioner, although in many cases where attendance would be beneficial the family doctor is the only health care professional with whom there is contact.
3. We need more information about these services, and in particular they should be brought to the attention of vocational trainees.

There are no agreed standards of assessment of fitness to work and there is a shortage of research into this and into rehabilitation. How often is a failure to resume work after illness due to failure to direct the patient towards the facilities available for rehabilitation? A group has been set up to encourage such research and pilot studies have been outlined for general practice.

There are problems of communication between employment, medical and social services; and the suggestion was made that Health Employment Liaison Officers (HELOs) should be ap-

pointed to educate hospital colleagues about the need to identify employment problems, and to make commonsense judgements as to whether or not an employment problem exists for a patient. These officers would make appropriate referrals for assessment and rehabilitation and would communicate information to hospital staff and general practitioners. The most appropriate person for such work would be the Occupational Therapist.

There is a need to improve the education of vocational trainees about work rehabilitation. The following publications, which represent the pre-conference reading list, can be recommended in this respect:

Current Arrangements for Liaison between Health, Social and Employment Services for the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled People. *National Advisory Council in Employment of Disabled People.*
Employment Rehabilitation. *Manpower Services Commission.*
Rehabilitation in the 1980s. *Royal College of Psychiatrists.*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MRCGP Examinations

Spring 1983

Written papers. Tuesday 17 May 1983
Orals. Edinburgh: week of 30 June—2 July 1983
London: week of 4–9 July 1983
Closing date: 17 March 1983
8 weeks: 3 September 1983

Autumn 1983

Written papers. Tuesday 1 November 1983
Orals. Edinburgh and London: week of 12–17 December 1983
Closing date: 8 September 1983
8 weeks: 11 February 1984

Spring 1984 (provisional)

Written papers. Tuesday 15 May 1984
Orals. Edinburgh: week beginning 2 July 1984
London: week beginning 9 July 1984 (ending 14 July)
Closing date: 15 March 1984
8 weeks: 1 September 1984

Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Examination Administrator at the College.

Courses for the MRCGP Examination

An intensive one-day course for trainees and others intending to take the MRCGP Examination is to be held at Hallwood Health Centre, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, on Sunday 13 March 1983. Details can be obtained from Dr B. W. McGuinness at the Hallwood Health Centre. A similar course is planned for 25 September 1983.

10th WONCA International World Conference 1983

The Conference, whose theme will be "The Family Practitioner in a Changing World", will be held in Singapore from 20–24 May. There will be a large programme of scientific papers and symposia on many subjects of interest to general practitioners. Further information about the programme is available from Rosamund Hunter Smart at the College, or from Dr Alfred Loh, College of General Practitioners of Singapore, 4A College Road, Singapore 0316. The College has appointed VIP Travel (International Conference Ser-

vices) Ltd., 42, North Audley Street, London S1A 4PY, to whom requests about travel and details of tours available should be directed.

Reminders

- 25 March. Colostomy Welfare Group Seminar. See *February Journal*.
- 28–31 March. Pharmacological treatments for alcoholism. See *December Journal*.
- 6–8 April. Research in rehabilitation. See *November Journal*.
- 17–20 April. Towards better general practice. See *October Journal*.
- 21 and 22 April. Contemporary issues in mental health. See *October Journal*.
- 6–9 June. Seminar on psychosomatic disorders. See *January Journal*.
- 38 August–3 September. Conference on stress and tension control. See *February Journal*.
- 8–11 September. Malaysia—Singapore Congress of Medicine. See *December Journal*.
- 19–24 September. SIMG Autumn Congress. See *February Journal*.
- 19 November. Symposium on audit. See *February Journal*.