

MEDICAL NEWS

Current Contents

Few general practitioners need to be reminded that not only have they far more than enough medical literature to read, but also that they forget what they have read. Most of us devise systems to overcome these two main problems; the solutions range from a desperate determination never to read anything again to various forms of ripping, selecting, abstracting and storing. One abstracting tool that is not well known to those who seldom visit a major library is *Current Contents*, a publication of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI).

Current Contents is printed weekly in a small format and gives sufficient details of all the articles in several hundred leading medical journals for the reader to be able to ask for a reprint from the author. Recently we have come to an agreement with the ISI and since January 1982 the *Journal* has been included in *Current Contents*. We hope that authors of articles in these pages will thereby have their work brought to the attention of a far larger world readership than hitherto.

Current Contents is not cheap and is not intended for the individual practice. However, general practitioners should be aware of its existence, and might feel like pressing their nearest medical library to subscribe. ISI will send a trial subscription for a few weeks (the European headquarters is at 132 High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1DP).

Topics in Drug Therapy



"Topics in Drug Therapy" is the first Open University course to be produced specifically for doctors. It has been developed in collaboration with the Council for Postgraduate Medical Education in England and Wales and aims to make doctors more aware of their reasons for prescribing drugs and of the choices open to them in doing so. It encourages doctors to ask themselves the questions "Need I prescribe?", "In what form shall I prescribe the drug?" and "How shall I monitor the treatment?"

The course deals with prescribing in

general and with prescribing two groups of frequently used drugs—benzodiazepines and antibiotics.

There are two major components—a workbook and audiotape for private study, and a videotape for use by small groups meeting in postgraduate medical centres with a course tutor. These materials are available to doctors through the clinical tutor at their local postgraduate centre. More detailed information about the course can be obtained from the Health and Social Welfare Section, The Open University, Sherwood House, Sherwood Drive, PO Box 188, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 6HW, or from Monica Howes, Course Manager. (Tel: Milton Keynes (0908) 71231 ext. 383)

"A Gentle Way with Cancer"

Six documentary films about the new and complementary approach to cancer and other chronic diseases offered by the Bristol Cancer Help Centre are being shown on BBC 2. The last three will appear on Thursdays 7, 14 and 21 April at 21.30 in the "Forty Minutes" programme. The films have been produced by a previously prize-winning team in the documentary section at Cannes.

Dr Alec Forbes, the Medical Director of the Bristol Centre, describes the new approach as considerably widening the medical model of cancer. He quotes the definition of treatments based on the medical model given by Dr John Heron, sociologist and Deputy Director of the British Postgraduate Medical Federation, as being "concerned with the physical body, external and confronting in nature". The Bristol Centre recognizes the other dimensions of humanity—in particular the psychosocial and transpersonal—and uses these in its treatment.

Brenda Kidman is someone who has had both kinds of treatment. Her book, also called "A Gentle Way with Cancer", was published by Century on 17 March and costs £2.95.

The Cameron Fund

The Council of the Cameron Fund is seeking to acquaint all general practitioners in the UK of the financial support that the Fund can give in cases of need to the widows and children of general practitioners. The Fund was set up in 1970 from money that had ac-

rued in the old group practice loans fund. The specific purpose was to ease financial hardship amongst general practitioners and their immediate families.

If you know of someone who is in need of financial help who has been a dependant of a general practitioner who has practised in the UK, then please put them in contact with the Cameron Fund, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP. (Tel: 01 388-0796), or with your own local medical committee secretary.

The fund cannot provide luxuries, but will help with basic subsistence, education and necessary irregular heavy items of expenditure where there is a need.

Health Education from the BBC

Copies of the BBC leaflet "Insight into Health" can be obtained from Insight Information, BBC, London W1A 1AA. (Tel: 01 580-4468 ext. 3229)

This leaflet gives advance information about BBC health education programmes and suggests ideas on how these programmes could be used.

Future BBC health education programmes include "Action Makes the Heart Grow Stronger" on radio, "Mind Your Heart" on television and "Well Woman" on both radio and television. The Insight leaflet gives outlines of each of the programmes that are planned and suggests useful reading lists to accompany them.

National Society of Non-Smokers

The National Society of Non-Smokers is a voluntary organization that was formed in 1926. Its aims are to help smokers who wish to break the habit, to deter young people from starting to smoke, to assist non-smokers to breathe clean air and to cooperate with agencies in this and other countries engaged in similar work. It operates an information and advice centre with a free walk-in or phone-in advisory service, which has medical support where appropriate. It also regularly organizes a five-day stop smoking plan in central London for a nominal fee, publishes information in a newsletter and provides qualified experts to talk or write about smoking. Membership is open to anyone, whether medically qualified or not, who is interested in furthering the Society's aims. The annual subscription is £5.

Further details about the Society and its advice centre can be obtained from: The National Society of Non-Smokers, Latimer House, 40/48 Hanson Street, London W1P 7DE. Tel: 01 636-9103.

Success for Medical Audit

The Solent Regional Health Authority has published details of its resource allocation exercise which has been carried out during the last few months. With the help of a firm of management consultants the Authority has been planning the best distribution of its resources based as far as possible on the parameter of needs rather than of numbers. Members of the Authority expressed their gratitude to local College members engaged in medical audit, who had responded to an informal request to provide accounts of this to assist the management consultants in their analysis.

The Authority has decided on a bilateral strengthening of services. There will be an increase in the number of specialist staff in the hospitals, and the strengthening of primary care will be achieved by channelling resources into the further education and training of existing staff. The tasks currently undertaken by general practitioners have been exhaustively analysed, and each task has been provisionally identified as appropriate to another member of the primary health care team.

Receptionists, who already have considerable expertise in sorting patients, will be given extra training to enable them to refer patients directly to the appropriate hospital specialist, instead of through a general practitioner. Health visitors and midwives will be trained to improve the skills they already have in managing patients in the community. The Authority intends to approach the College formally

for advice on the devising of training curricula for the other primary health care team members, so that they will be able fully to take over the general practitioners' duties within five years.

This shift of resources within the primary health care team—from investment in the expensive training and employment of general practitioners to the fuller use of the skills of those members of the primary health care team who make smaller financial demands on the community—will be carefully observed by other Regional Health Authorities.

The Chairman of the Solent Authority, Mrs April First, said that the Department of Health and Social Security was to be asked to facilitate the scheme by permitting high-street pharmacists to prescribe certain categories of drugs, and by relaxing the rules regulating which drugs may be sold over the counter.

HELP!

Eight Fact Sheets for Pregnancy from Thames Television

The Thames Television programme "Help!", in association with the Maternity Alliance, have produced a series of eight fact sheets concerning different aspects of pregnancy. The topics covered include health advice for the pre-conception period, hazards in early pregnancy, options for antenatal care and delivery, diet, maternity benefits, employment rights and advice on symptoms that may develop during pregnancy. The final sheet deals with the oft forgotten father—his role and the difficulties that he may face. These leaflets are outstandingly well presented—the information is given in a concise and direct form and beautifully complemented by a series of amusing and relevant cartoons. Doctors can obtain supplies of these fact sheets from Help!, Thames Television Ltd, 149 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9LL. (Tel: 01 388-5199)





Prestige

Further information is available on request from:
 Roche Products Limited
 PO Box 8
 Welwyn Garden City
 Hertfordshire AL7 3AY
 Valium is a trade mark



In anxiety
Valium Roche
 diazepam

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