

by the end of 1982.

The JCPT's responsibility for monitoring the quality of training programmes continues to be carried out mainly by visits paid every other year to regions to evaluate the overall organization and the effectiveness of training schemes. The Committee's Report states that a most important component of these visits is the inspection of teaching practices which includes

an interview with the appointed trainer. The Committee comments:

'The visitors have reported that the practices used for teaching are in general well organized and offer a comprehensive service to their communities, but defects in practice records remain frequent—the Joint Committee has set a deadline of January 1984 for minimum standards of records in teaching practices—and in

the assessment and progress of monitoring trainees. Many visitors have reported discrepancies between trainers' and trainees' perceptions of time given to teaching in the practices.'

Copies of the Committee's Annual Report can be obtained from The Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU. (Tel: 01 581-3232)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

International Teaching Course

A five day course for teachers of general medical practice was held in April at the Inter-University Centre Dubrovnik. Twenty course organizers from Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Yugoslavia, the UK and the USSR took part. The broad title *Organizing a teaching programme* provided a chance to retrace in this group the essential steps in the educational process, from objectives based on the needs of the learners to evaluation of the course. It was also an opportunity for international exchange of ideas, especially valuable because of the presence of members from the USSR.

The Inter-University Centre, in a particularly beautiful setting in Dubrov-

nik, is supported by 150 universities all over the world, including several in this country.

The course, among the first international ventures of its kind, will be repeated next April. Enquiries should be addressed to the Secretariat, The Inter-University Centre of Post-Graduate Studies, Frana Bulica 4. YU 50,0000 Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. (Tel: (050) 28.666)

Janssen Prize 1983

This prize, awarded by the Societas Internationalis Medicinae Generalis (SIMG), is open to any general practitioner or group of doctors working in primary care and living in Europe. Its aim is to support and promote research in general practice. Protocols of up to

1,000 words should be typed in English, German or French. They should state the potential significance of the research work as well as its aims and the methods to be employed.

The winner will receive 30,000 Belgian francs (equivalent to £388) when the prize is awarded, and another 20,000 Belgian francs (equivalent to £258) when the research work has been completed. The work should be completed within two years and the prizewinner should be prepared to present the results at a SIMG meeting.

The closing date is 30 November 1983; entries should be sent to Professor Dr R. De Smet, Secretary of the Jury, Centrum voor Huisartsopleiding, Rijksuniversiteit Gent, Academisch Ziekenhuis, De Pintelaan 185, B-9000 Gent, Belgium.

FROM THE FACULTIES

'Faculty News'—the Newsletter of the North and West London Faculty

Faculty News is one of the most progressive faculty newsletters in the College. Its success owes much to the energy and enthusiasm of its Editor, Dr Bashir Qureshi. In this article he considers how *Faculty News* evolved and the difficulties he encountered in setting it up. He discusses its funding and distribution and the problems that other faculties might encounter in establishing similar newsletters in their own areas.

If you want to start something new don't ask: just get on and do it and see if anyone can stop you! The odds are that you will succeed. These were my feelings when I was asked to develop my faculty's newsletter at its Annual General Meeting in September 1980.

In producing *Faculty News*, my cen-

tral aim has been to publish a printed newsletter of good educational value to general practitioners and trainees whilst at the same time providing a vehicle for communication between faculty members and others in the College. I have endeavoured to produce a quarterly publication of worthwhile content and at the least expense to the

faculty. In order to do this I have needed three things—support from faculty members, money to print the newsletter and good writers to contribute to it.

Support from faculty members

All members are keen to read a worthwhile publication; some are willing to write for it but in the event only a few are able to contribute. Nevertheless the wholehearted support of faculty members has always been a great asset and was essential to the conception of the newsletter.

Money to print it

Initially I contacted the College printers who were willing to produce a four-



page, A4 size, typeset, photocopied newsletter for £225 for 400 copies. Such a newsletter could have contained only reports of faculty events and would have allowed no room for any original articles. Also, it would have cost the faculty £900 a year to produce a quarterly newsletter, and this was too large a sum for our budget.

Next, therefore, I contacted the local representatives of various pharmaceutical companies. None was able to provide a sum as large as £900 from their regional budgets and they could not obtain more money from their national budgets because the newsletter was not a national publication. The venture seemed doomed to failure at the outset.

However, after considerable thought, I contacted the national publicity managers of the current sponsoring pharmaceutical companies who were able to provide a large sum of money, provided that they had the unique privilege of advertising and that the paper was distributed nationally.

Distribution to all the 25,000 general practitioners in the country was beyond me, so I compromised and negotiated a limited national circulation. This includes all members of the faculty, members of College Council, the secretaries of other faculties, medical libraries, medical schools, postgraduate centres, the other Royal Colleges, teaching departments of general practice, a selected list of other general practitioners and some specialists in other disciplines.

Good writers to contribute

Faculty News needed to be established as a paper of high quality to attract top writers from within and outside the

faculty in the face of competition from the commercial medical press. Editorship is 1 per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration. I always wrote persuasive letters in my own handwriting and used the personal touch to obtain contributions.

Faculty News today

Faculty News is the newsletter of the home faculty and it serves to link the members of the faculty with each other and with others in the College and medical profession. Medical and national press, as well as British television and overseas radio stations as far as Australia, have reproduced and mentioned articles from *Faculty News*—articles that have included *Favourite Remedies* by Herbert Barrie, *The President Explains* by John Horder, *Would you Share our Aims?* by Alastair Donald, *Modern Conservative Treatment in Breast Cancer* by Harold Ellis,

The faculty—your neighbourhood College?

W. MCN. STYLES

General Practitioner, Shepherd's Bush, London.

The term 'faculty' has been applied in its academic sense to the geographical sub-units of the College—each a group of members working together to uphold the College's aims to improve the quality of patient care. Our founders believed this regional organization to be of the greatest importance, since it enabled the College to assist nearly all its members, and they in return could supply to Council information about their needs and many other aspects of general practice.¹ The early faculties were concerned mainly with local arrangements for undergrad-

Slimming Fashions by Arnold Bender and *Health and Safety at Work* by Frank Tyrer.

As well as these, contributions and reports from faculty members have been included as top priority.

Sponsorship

Since the first issue in April 1981 there have been eight issues of *Faculty News*, published at approximately quarterly intervals; five by Stuart Pharmaceuticals, one by Bencard and two by Upjohn Limited.

About 1,500 copies are printed at a cost of approximately £1,500 per issue. In return, the sponsors have the privilege of sole advertising. Moreover, *Faculty News* reaches parts of the College that other newspapers fail to reach; for example it is distributed to all participants at the Annual General Meetings and Spring Meetings of the College.

Distribution

Faculty News is distributed free of charge. It is sent with other circulars to members of the faculty. Council members and the secretaries of other faculties receive their copies with College circulars. A large number of copies is distributed nationally by medical representatives so that the publication is circulated as widely as possible.

Cost to the faculty

The faculty only pays part of the postage and it covers the editor's out of pocket expenses—about £15 a month. No other expenses fall to the faculty.

In return the faculty produces a publication with a good national and regional reputation that does much to boost the morale of faculty members and to improve communication between them.