Visiting the elderly

Sir,

Two years ago we set up a voluntary scheme from within our practice population to visit the elderly who are either infirm or relatively housebound. The visitors also act as a liaison between the medical services and our patients. As the scheme has grown we have looked for other practices who might be doing the same thing. We would very much like to hear from them if they would be interested in meeting to discuss the issues and to compare results.

PETER KERSLEY
Tanglewood
Park Road
Stoke Poges
Bucks SL2 4PJ

Generic inhalers

Sir,

I have recently finished my vocational training and become a principal in general practice. I have always been a great enthusiast of generic prescribing but several of my patients have complained that their generically prescribed drugs are not as good as the original brand named products. In most cases I have been able to reassure them by an explanation about generic prescribing.

However, in the case of aerosol inhalations the quality of the delivery mechanism is just as important as the actual content of the aerosol canister. Several asthmatics have complained that salbutamol inhalers are not of as high a quality and do not deliver the same effect as the original brand product. Recently one of my patients had an inhaler which lasted only four days and delivered 40 doses at most.

I have taken this up with the pharmacist and will contact the manufacturer but I would be interested to know if other practitioners are finding similar problems with generic inhalation medicines.

R. ANTONY
Old Harlow Health Centre
Jenner House
Garden Terrace Road
Harlow
Essex CM17 0AX

AIDS, HIV and general practice

Sir,

I recently represented the College at a seminar on the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) which was organized by the TUC for their members. I came...