FUTURE PERFECT
In this month’s BJGP two of the most senior doctors in the UK look ahead at the next 5 years. In her editorial with Laura Shallcross, Professor Dame Sally Davies, the Chief Medical Officer, reflects on the potentially dire consequences of the continuing over-prescribing of antibiotics and the inexorable rise in antimicrobial resistance. The Department of Health has now developed a 5-year antimicrobial resistance strategy, and a new TARGET antibiotic toolkit is available for use by primary healthcare teams, containing material for patients. Later in this issue Professor Sir Bruce Keogh, the Medical Director of the NHS, and colleagues, highlight the Department of Health’s Five Year Forward View, reflecting an emerging health policy sympathetic to the idea that general practice is central to the survival of an affordable and effective health service, and promises greater investment in the components of the consultation, such as empathy, patient involvement, communication skills, and the like but, as in a good play or a poem, this subtle choreography that creates the ‘tunefulness’ of the consultation, should be almost invisible, rather than paraded. In Adam’s Curse, WB Yeats wrote that: ‘A line will take us hours maybe; yet if it does not seem a moment’s thought, our stitching and unstitching has been naught.’

In his editorial Simon Glew reflects on the audit cycle, that old stalwart of practice improvement, which is, he thinks, due for a makeover. Peter Gill, from Toronto, has used a consensus-building system to generate a valuable set of primary care quality indicators for children. Martin Marshall, Professor of Healthcare Improvement at University College London, takes us into new, only partly-charted waters in a fascinating study conducted in the East End of London, where quality improvement methods were used to try to improve the management of obstructive pulmonary disease. Later, the importance of using outcome data to measure quality of care is examined by both Richard Baker and John England, while Mairead Murphy and colleagues consider the potential and limitations of the use of patient-reported outcome measures.

If structure process and outcome, and the legacy of Avedis Donabedian, are too much, turn to our Out of Hours section and experience the mysteries of existentialism, the thrills of the 68th Edinburgh International Film Festival, and shiver at the prospect of the Krapsule (the Christmas present for the Krapsule). Then listen to the thrills of the 68th Edinburgh International Film Festival, and shiver at the prospect of the 68th Edinburgh International Film Festival, and shiver at the prospect of the Krapsule. The Christmas present for the Krapsule? We are most grateful to Liam Smith, who wrote the column.

Finally, we are running a writing competition for medical students, with details appearing on the website. We will try to publish as many of the best entries as possible and the very best will have the opportunity to spend a short internship here at the BJGP.

Roger Jones
Editor

REFERENCE

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