



columns

second their statement that "management [of transsexual patients] includes . . . the real 'real life experience'" ("cross-living"). In similar vein, Ferguson (2002) recently proposed a 'uniform' national standard of care which stated that "the person will be expected to enter the Real Life Experience" and envisaged hormonal support (for male to female transsexuals) for no more than 3 months unless the patient committed to cross-living full-time.

The use of hormone therapy can sometimes suffice to spare transsexuals the medical and legal consequences of surgery or cross-role living, and accords with the principle of least intervention. The transsexual opting for surgery faces a battle with osteoporosis, yet the authors presented no data about the availability of endocrinological postoperative support.

FERGUSON, B. (2002) Guidance for the Management of Transsexualism, (paper presented to a meeting of the Faculty of Social and Community Psychiatry of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, at the Royal Society of Medicine, London, April 16 2002).

HARRY BENJAMIN INTERNATIONAL GENDER DYSPHORIA ASSOCIATION (1998) *The Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorders*, 5th Edition. Dusseldorf: Symposium Press.

— (2001) *The Standards of Care for Gender Identity Disorders*, 6th Edition. Dusseldorf: Symposium Press.

MURJAN, S., SHEPHERD, M., FERGUSON, B. G. (2002) What services are available for the treatment of transsexuals in Great Britain? *Psychiatric Bulletin*, **26**, 210–212.

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Access to emergency assessments for adolescent populations

Sir: The article by Corrigan and Mitchell (*Psychiatric Bulletin*, October 2002, **26**, 388–392) provides a valuable contribution to the debate on emergency provision for adolescents with severe mental health difficulties. The authors describe a service offering emergency access 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. In 1995, "Pine Lodge" Young People's Centre in Chester set up just such a service (Cotgrove, 1997). In our experience, at times, an emergency admission adds nothing to the resolution of a young person's difficulties, but can result in a lost opportunity to enhance motivation through careful pre-admission objective setting and care planning. For this reason we perform our own assessment with a

different emphasis which is not simply a duplication of the referrer's.

Alongside emergency admissions, we have continued to take planned admissions of young people with a wide range of complex disorders. However, treating youngsters with different needs within one unit is not without some cost to the therapeutic milieu and ward atmosphere.

It is vital that adolescent populations have access to emergency assessments and for some, immediate admission. However, I suggest that a range of in-patient services are required to meet the needs of adolescents with the most severe and complex disorders. Close working relationships between units, possibly to the extent of common assessment and admission pathways, can avoid fragmentation. Ideally, the service described by Corrigan and Mitchell should be seen as one in a network of services rather than an alternative to other specialist provision.

COTGROVE, A. J. (1997) Emergency admissions to a regional adolescent unit: piloting a new service. *Psychiatric Bulletin*, **21**, 604–608.

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the college

Annual elections – Honorary Officers

Council and Court of Electors

Members are reminded of their rights in connection with the forthcoming elections for the vacancies on the Court of Electors and for elected members of Council. There are four vacancies on the Court of Electors. There are vacancies for two Fellows and two Members on Council. The relevant Bye-Laws and Regulations are printed below.

The nominating meeting of the Council will be held on 24 January 2003 and the last date for receiving nominations will therefore be 21 February 2003. Nomination forms are available from Andrea Woolf.

Extracts from the Bye-Laws and Regulations

Bye-Law XXI The Court of Electors

...
The Court of Electors shall be composed of:

- (a) The President, Dean and Registrar, each of whom shall be an ex-officio member of the court of Electors; and
(b) Fifteen Electors who shall be chosen in the manner hereinafter prescribed from amongst the fellows.

...
At the first meeting of the Council in alternate years after the name of the President for the next ensuing College year has become known, the Council shall nominate a sufficient number of candidates for appointment as Electors to ensure an election, which will be held by a postal ballot of all Members of the College in the manner prescribed by the Regulations. Additional nominations may be lodged with the Registrar between the beginning of the then current calendar year and the end of four clear weeks after the meeting of the Council above referred to. No such nominations shall be valid unless it be supported in writing by twelve Members of the College and accompanied by the nominee's written consent to serve if elected.

Regulation XIX The Council

Elections shall be held in alternate years to ensure that there are not less than six

elected Members of Council and no more than six elected Fellows of the Council subject to the overall condition that no elected Member or Fellow shall serve on Council for more than six years in that capacity without a break of at least one year. At its first meeting in each alternate College year after the name of the President for the next ensuing College year has become known, the Council shall nominate the necessary number of Members and Fellows of the College to ensure that there are no more than six elected Fellows and not less than six elected Members serving on Council. Any nominee who is proposed and seconded and gives his or her consent in writing to serve, shall be validly nominated. Any twelve Members of the College may make nominations in writing at any time between the first day of January in each alternate year and the date which is four clear weeks after the meeting of the Council at which nominations were made.

Nominations other than those made by the Council shall be lodged with the Registrar and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate to serve if elected. Should there be more nominations than vacancies, an election shall be held by ballot of the Members of the