

NEWS ITEMS

The University of Manchester Faculty of Medicine

Registered medical practitioners are invited to apply for a course in preparation for the degree of Master of Science (Psychiatry), starting in October 1978. The course will consist of part-time instruction during nine university terms. For the first two years there will be two days teaching every week in biological, clinical, social and psychological aspects of psychiatry and the methodology of research. The candidate will be examined at the end of the second year and will present a thesis at the end of the third.

Candidates should normally hold training posts at one of the psychiatric units in the Manchester region. Vacancies for such posts will be advertised in the medical press in April.

Further particulars can be obtained from Professor D. P. Goldberg, Department of Psychiatry, University Hospital of South Manchester, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 8LR, to whom application should be made as soon as possible.

Society of Clinical Psychiatrists Research Fund

This Fund (Charity Commission registered number 269593) was established in 1975 in association with the Society of Clinical Psychiatrists, founded in 1957.

Its declared aim is to provide financial and practical assistance to senior psychiatrists undertaking, or wishing to complete, clinical or epidemiological researches in psychiatry, and especially those poorly placed to attract support from official funding bodies and organizations. Normally some resources for research will be available to the applicant, and the Trustees expect to supplement what is available rather than provide all the needs for a project. Consideration will be given to requests for finances to cover postage, limited travel, acquisition of relevant literature, extra secretarial help, statistical work and advice. An advisory service on methodology and information sources is being built up. Videotape and data handling equipment are available on loan, as is a portable programmable scientific calculator.

The times are not favourable for charities, but the Fund has already accumulated several thousand pounds. Clinical and epidemiological researches in psychiatry are not outstandingly expensive. The Fund does not support psychiatrically relevant but technologically very expensive research in the physical sciences, funds for which are available elsewhere.

The Trustees' policy is to allow freedom to the investigator to pursue his own ideas, and to provide requested resources as quickly as possible.

The practical value of the research and the quality of an applicant's previously published work will be taken into consideration. There is an enormous potential for useful clinical and epidemiological research within the psychiatric hospitals and units providing comprehensive care and treatment to those in need from within the populations of defined geographical areas. At present heavy case loads, shortage of capable junior medical staff and a general disinclination to give up voluntary time all serve to dampen enthusiasm for research, and obscure the deeper purposes of medicine. Nevertheless, despite such adverse contemporary influences the Fund is already supporting two clinical studies, previously shelved for lack of funds, a newly launched clinical study and an epidemiological inquiry, all from within 'peripheral' N.H.S. hospitals.

The Fund is available to S.C.P. members (who are all senior psychiatrists, i.e. Senior Registrar, Consultant, or equivalent). Dr M. T. Haslam, Clifton Hospital, York, is Hon. Secretary of the Society, and Dr J. C. Little, Crichton Royal, Dumfries, is Hon. Secretary of the Research Fund.

A Joint Venture in Mental Health in Tameside

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and Tameside Area Health Authority have recently opened a joint-financed Centre of a type unique to this country. On 1 December 1977 a Community Mental Health Centre was opened at Brindle House, Hyde, to serve the Hyde and Glossop areas, as a complement to existing hospital-based services. The Centre aims to provide a wide range of facilities for the early identification and treatment of mental disorders, with the emphasis on maximum involvement of the clients in treatment decisions, and a balance between group and individual therapies.

The Centre is staffed by a team of doctors, social workers, psychologists and general therapists, each major discipline being autonomous, with sharing of duty rotas and other tasks. Each client is allocated to a 'key therapist' who will agree with him a treatment programme on 'problem-orientated' lines, and will review progress with him at intervals. The Centre will cater for approximately 30 people per day, with others attending for specific groups or one-to-one interviews. Particular features of the Centre are that there is a nursery for pre-school children and that the staff includes a full-time drama therapist.

The medical staff will divide their time between the Centre and the existing in-patient unit at Tame-

side General Hospital, but referrals will be channelled through the Centre. Medication will not be dispensed at the Centre but will be obtained by the client from his general practitioner. Clients will have access to all information in their case records other than that specifically excluded as confidential.

Social workers will participate in groups and other Centre activities, and will also carry cases from home

visiting, using a 'whole family' approach as far as possible.

It is hoped that the Centre will offer a more appropriate response to the needs of the mentally disordered, in particular for those whose problems have a major social or environmental component, and will facilitate a more logical division of therapeutic effort between medical and non-medical therapists.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

University of Birmingham Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

An intensive residential course in Forensic Psychiatry will be held at Wyddrington Hall, The Vale, University of Birmingham, from 3-6 April. The course, which is open to senior and junior psychiatrists, is of particular interest to M.R.C.Psych. and D.P.M. candidates, but others, including consultants and prison medical officers, are welcome. General practitioners may attend under Section 63. Course fees: Residents (including accommodation and all meals) £47; Non-residents (including coffee, lunch, tea and dinner) £34. Enquiries about the course should be sent to Dr R. Bluglass, Postgraduate Clinical Tutor in Forensic Psychiatry, Midland Centre for Forensic Psychiatry, All Saints Hospital, Lodge Road, Birmingham, B18 5SD. Applications to attend, accompanied by the appropriate fee, should be sent *as soon as possible* to Professor J. M. Malins, Director, Board of Graduate Clinical Studies, The Medical School, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TJ. Cheques should be crossed and made payable to 'University of Birmingham'.

Centre for Research into Adolescent Breakdown

A half-day release course, from October 1978 to June 1979 is offered to professional people who are at present working in the public sector and are actively engaged in the psychological treatment of seriously disturbed adolescents. The course will have a psycho-analytic orientation and will include lectures and clinical seminars with emphasis on assessment of psychopathology and problems of treatment. The fee will be £180 and the course will be limited to a maximum of 18 participants. Intending applications should apply to their R.H.A. or employing authority

for study leave and payment of fees. Further details and application forms are obtainable from Dr Ronald Baker, Brent Consultation Centre, 51 Winchester Avenue, London N.W.6. Telephone 01-328 0918. *The closing date for applications is 31 March 1978.*

The Winnicott Memorial Fund

The Winnicott Memorial Fund of the British Psycho-Analytical Society, in association with the Royal College of Midwives, is holding a one-day conference on 'The Beginnings of Life: is a new formula needed in the maternity services?' on Friday, 21 April, at Bedford College (University of London), Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS. The intention is to consider how our present services meet the needs of babies and their parents during the period of birth and afterwards. Applications, accompanied by the conference fee of £6.00 (which includes coffee, lunch and afternoon tea) should be sent *immediately* to Mrs Joyce Coles, 120 Corringway, Ealing, London W5 3HA.

British Association for Psychopharmacology

A scientific meeting, organized by the British Association for Psychopharmacology, will be held at the Royal College of Physicians, London NW1, on 7 April. The programme will include the B.A.P. annual guest lecture by Dr Irwin Kopin, Chief, Laboratory of Clinical Science, National Institutes for Mental Health, U.S.A., and a half-day symposium on 'Mechanisms of Action of Benzodiazepines', which will present recent discoveries concerning the existence of benzodiazepine receptors. Further details from the Honorary Secretary, Professor E. S. Paykel, Department of Psychiatry, St George's Hospital Medical School, London SW17.