

drugs consumed by many patients, especially the elderly, are mentioned under *prevention*. In the section on *prescribing*, attention is drawn to the misuse of psychotropics, risk of self-poisoning, repeat prescriptions, and the uptake of widely advertised new preparations. In *general comments* mention is made of the work of practice teams, including receptionists and ancillary workers, presumably including CPNs where available.

Baker accepts that the setting of standards of care in general practice could be unrealistic and change rapidly with changes in societal demands. There is also the danger that such recommended standards are not set in a comprehensive review of practice as a whole.

This paper had relevance to ourselves in that it reminds us of our own need to review the standard of care we as specialists provide for psychiatric patients referred to us, and also reminds us and our GP colleagues of the importance of the wide variety of psychiatric disorders presenting in primary care settings.

**Occasional Paper 40: Rating Scales for Vocational Trainees in GP 1988.** By the Centre for Primary Care Research, Department of General Practice, University of Manchester. Pp. 25. £5.00.

This paper sets out in detail 23 areas of skill required of vocational trainees, organised under the main headings of history and examination (6 scales), diagnosing and defining the problem (4 scales), management (5 scales), emergency care (3 scales) and professionalism (5 scales). Each scale has a main component under 10 boxes ranging from "poor performance" of that particular skill, up to "skilled performance". There then follows a number of subscales examining that skill in detail on a 5-point range of "seldom performed" to "usually performed". Notes for raters accompany the scales.

The scales of particular interest to ourselves are as follows: psychiatric aspects of history taking and diagnosis (scale 2), hypothesis formation (7), hypothesis testing (8), coping with uncertainty (11), using community resources (12), interpersonal skills in prescribing (14), emergencies – acute psychoses, depression (including the assessment of suicidal risk), and panic attacks (18), and finally, accessibility, involvement, commitment, working with colleagues and personal development, under professionalism (19–23).

Again, this paper has relevance to us in that it serves as a model whereby we might assess the content of the curriculum and the progress of our trainees towards the MRCPsych, and it again reminds us of the important aspects of the psychiatric component of primary medical care.

**Ross MITCHELL, Community Psychiatrist,  
Cambridge.**

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## Videotape review

**The Final Choice: An Introduction to Suicide**  
(UK 1988, 40 mins.)

This videotape deals with suicide in a wide perspective. It offers a comprehensive survey of historical and religious developments, it compares differing national and cultural attitudes and it outlines various legal aspects. Sociological, psychological and psychiatric factors are discussed, supported by statistics and useful 'clinical' (enacted) recordings. It includes some fascinating asides; for example, suicide predates man, and dogs commit suicide (not a lot of psychiatrists know that!).

The whole is very effectively bound together by an excellent link-man (Paul Sinclair – an actor?) and there are some authoritative comments from Professor Philip Seager. A "Senior Tutor for Continuing Education" also appears, who must be assumed to be a nurse (the producers are rather fond of anonymity) and, to a less effect, the publicity officer for MIND and the National Chairperson of The Samaritans contribute in part II.

Technically this is a very competent production, with excellent titling and graphics. It is sympathetic, maintains interest and gives a clear, easy-to-follow, exposition of the subject. It would, however, have benefited from more vigorous cutting, especially of the 'clinical' recordings which go on long after they have made their point. It is intended however for members of The Samaritans, MIND and other mental health volunteers, as well as professionals in training. For the last group part I (20 minutes) contains most, but not all, of the main points and

would more effectively fit into a teaching programme. An excellent *first* choice as a broad introduction to suicide.

**Production:** Wilf Parsons for MIND.

**Distribution:** MIND, 22 Harley Street, London W1N 2ED. (Format VHS.)

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### *Videotapes for psychiatric teaching*

A catalogue produced by the Audio-Visual Group giving details of about 140 tapes selected for their teaching value is available from the Department of Education at the College.

T. L. PILKINGTON

## Miscellany

### **Request for Greek candidates, University of Thrace**

Greek citizens who are psychologists, psychiatrists, social psychiatric assistants or in any specialty related to health care, and who have graduated or are post-graduates from universities in the UK, are required by the psychiatric clinic of the University of Thrace in Alexandroupolis (Greece) for positions offered in the clinic and for the psychiatric programmes already under way at the department of Evros and Phocide. Candidates should contact Professor P. Sakellaropoulos, Director, Psychiatric Clinic, Hôpital Général d'Etat, Alexandroupolis (68 100), Greece.

### **New publication**

*Stress and Coping in the Greek Communities in Britain*, edited by N. Bouras and R. Littlewood, is available from: Research, Evaluation and Development Unit, Division of Psychiatry, Guy's Hospital, London SE1 9RT, price £3.50. Contents include: Ethnic Minorities and Mental Health in Britain by Roland Littlewood; Aspects of Ethnicity, Class and Generation among Greek-Cypriots by Floya Anthias; Working with Children and Families by Maria Callias; Involvement of Families and Children in Therapy by Chryso Andreou; and Service Provision by Pamela Constantinides.

### **Awards**

The Schizophrenia Association of Great Britain wishes to make an award of £500 in 1989 to a young researcher in the field of the biology of schizophrenia. It is to be known as the Annette Award to commemorate the daughter of one of its members. It is hoped also to link the award to an appeal to young people with a view partly to widening public knowledge about schizophrenia. The award is to be made in May 1989 and submissions of accounts of research, not exceeding 5,000 words, should be sent to: The Annette Award, The Schizophrenia Association of Great Britain, Bryn Hyfryd, The Crescent, Bangor,

Gwynedd LL57 2AG (telephone 0248 354048) by 14 April 1989.

The International Psychogeriatric Association announces the creation of a new, biennial Research Award in psychogeriatrics. This award, which is sponsored by Bayer AG, will be offered every two years for presentation and recognition at each IPA International Congress. It will be given for the best original research paper in the field of psychogeriatrics. Any unpublished, original research paper in English will be considered. All papers should be accompanied by an abstract of not more than 250 words. Further information: International Psychogeriatric Association, 3127 Greenleaf Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091, USA.

### **Appeal**

The British Association of Psychotherapists has launched an appeal to raise £400,000 for a Teaching and Psychotherapy Centre. The Centre will enable the BAP to train more therapists and to provide clinic facilities for children, adolescents, their families, and adults, at modest fees. Further information: The Secretary, The British Association of Psychotherapists, 121 Hendon Lane, London N3 3PR (telephone 01-346 1747).

### **Workshop on schizophrenia (India)**

The Schizophrenia Research Foundation (India) is organising a Workshop on 'Natural History and Outcome of Schizophrenia' from 25–27 February 1989 at Madras. Professor Michael Shepherd and Professor Hugh Hafner (FRG) will participate in the workshop. It is hoped it will provide effective guidelines for future research in chronic mental illness in India. Those interested in obtaining a copy of the proceedings should write to: Dr M. Sarada Menon, Schizophrenia Research Foundation (India), No. C-46, 13th Street, East Anna Nagar, Madras-600 102, India.

*The Editors welcome news of Members.*