

Prescription Charges

In another oral answer on 10 June Mrs. Castle said that her policy on prescription charges was to phase them out. "It is an integral part of our approach to the health service that it should be free at the point of use. People should be taxed in order to provide the services when they are healthy and not taxed or subjected to prescription charges or anything else when they are sick. That remains our policy." About 3% of N.H.S. finances came from charges, so that even if those were doubled, she said, they would represent only a minute part of the budget. Mrs. Castle did not accept that prescription charges helped to save waste in the prescribing of drugs which were not always needed. "Responsibility for prescribing wisely but economically," she said, "rests with the general practitioner."

MEDICAL NEWS

Survey of Junior Doctors' Work Patterns

In a June newsletter to regional committees of junior staff Dr. I. McKim Thompson, Secretary, H.J.S. Group Council, refers to a survey of the working patterns of junior doctors. This survey is in connexion with the 40-hour basic contract due to start on 1 October 1975 and has been asked for by the Review Body which is considering evidence from the professions and the Department of Health about pricing the new contracts. All junior staff should have received a survey form and an explanatory covering letter agreed between the profession's representatives and the D.H.S.S. The survey is designed to provide information on the average number of hours each week junior doctors spend working, on call or on standby, and off duty, as well as on how their duties are distributed throughout the week.

Nurse Practitioner Family Planning Clinics

The Department of Health is to provide funds for a research project at King's College Hospital, London, for an experimental family planning clinic run by specially trained nurses. The project's aim is to assess the feasibility of using such nurses to give family planning advice and to prescribe and fit all forms of contraceptive currently in use. The nurses will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the clinic, but a doctor will retain overall responsibility and also countersign prescriptions. The Department of Health emphasizes that the results will need to be carefully assessed with the professional and advisory bodies concerned with family planning. It is not intended that it should anticipate the results of the joint working group on the Distribution and Supervision of Oral Contraceptives recently set up by the Central Health Services Council, the Committee on Safety of Medicines, and the Medicines Commission.

University Hospitals Association

A University Hospitals Association (England and Wales) has been formed to act as a forum for discussion and as a channel of

communication for the medical staff in university hospitals, medical schools, and faculties of medicine in England and Wales. The association will encourage the maintenance and improvement of standards of service, teaching, and research in university hospitals. Its chairman is Dr. Kenneth Maclean, of Guy's Hospital, London.

Common Market Doctors Honoured

The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh has awarded honorary fellowship of the College to a distinguished physician from each of the eight other Common Market countries. The eight physicians are: Professor M. Verstraete (Belgium); Dr. Christian Hamburger (Denmark); Professor P. B. B. Gatenby (Eire); Professor Jean Hamburger (France); Professor Cesare Bartorelli (Italy); Dr. Simon Hertz (Luxembourg); Professor dr. D. Durrer (the Netherlands); and Professor Dr. G. A. Martini (West Germany).

The Doctor in Industry 1975

The B.M.A. pamphlet *The Doctor in Industry*, setting out the Association's policy on the employment of doctors in occupational health, has been revised for the first time since 1971. Minor amendments have been made to take into account, for example, the restructuring of the occupational health grades approved by the Council last November. Copies may be obtained from B.M.A. regional offices, or from the Secretary, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP.

Scottish Society of Rehabilitation Medicine

Doctors working in Scotland and interested in any aspect of rehabilitation medicine are invited to join the newly formed Scottish Society of Rehabilitation Medicine whose president is Dr. G. G. Browning. Further details are available from Honorary Secretary, Dr. J. Simpson, Medical Rehabilitation Unit, 80 Bellshill Road, Uddingston.

People in the News

Major-General W. O'Brien has been appointed an Honorary Physician to the Queen in succession to Major-General R. G. MacFarlane.

Colonel F. L. Constable has been appointed an Honorary Physician to the Queen in succession to Colonel J. M. Hughes.

Colonel D. N. Stewart has been appointed Honorary Surgeon to the Queen in succession to Colonel H. G. Brown.

COMING EVENTS

Cremation Society of Great Britain.—Annual conference, 15-17 July, Eastbourne. Details and application forms from the secretary of the society, Woodcut House, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent ME17 1XH. (Tel. 0622 38034.)
Biochemical Society.—557th meeting, 16-18 July, Liverpool. Details from the Meetings

Officer, the Biochemical Society, 7 Warwick Court, Holborn, London WC1R 5DP. (Tel. 01-242 1076-8.)

Royal College of Physicians of London.—Clinicopathological conference, 31 July. For details see advertisement at p. viii.

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

*For attending lectures marked * a fee is charged or a ticket is required. Applications should be made first to the institution concerned.*

Monday, 23 June

INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY.—4.30 p.m., Mr. M. F. Stranc: Principles and Methods in Plastic Surgery.

Tuesday, 24 June

INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGY.—5.30 p.m., Professor Fred Plum (U.S.A.): Experimental and Clinical Studies in Anoxic-Ischaemic Brain Disease.

Wednesday, 25 June

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—5 p.m., Arnott Demonstration by Miss Jessie Dobson: The Scientific Contribution of Richard Owen.
ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.—2 p.m., Dr. C. L. Berry: The Development of Vessels and Degenerative Disease.

Thursday, 26 June

ROYAL SOCIETY OF TROPICAL MEDICINE AND HYGIENE.—6 p.m., Dr. D. A. Warrell: Snake Bite in Nigeria.
ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL.—5 p.m., Professor J. Loewenthal (Australia): The Australasian Renal Transplant Experience.

Friday, 27 June

CAMBRIDGE GRADUATES MEDICAL CLUB.—7 p.m., annual general meeting and dinner.*

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

LONDON

M.S.—O. O. Bassey.
M.D.—Jennifer E. Angell-James, G. A. Currie.

MANCHESTER

M.D.—S. G. Spiro, P. A. Sykes, T. V. Taylor, A. Watson.

APPOINTMENTS

HAMPSHIRE AREA HEALTH AUTHORITY (TEACHING).—Dr. R. J. Hallett (consultant paediatrician).

Corrections

Postpartum Rubella Vaccination and Anti-D Prophylaxis

In this short report by Drs. E. Maroni and J. Munzinger (7 June, p. 541) the name of Dr. D. W. Charters was misspelled as Charles.

Notice to Authors

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