

general practitioner to decide whether to prescribe a preparation on Form E.C.10 even when the use of that preparation is recommended by a consultant. . . . The executive council is bound only to provide such substances or things as are, under the National Health Service Act, 'drugs and medicines and prescribed appliances.' Unless therefore a preparation prescribed by a doctor is, in law, medicine or a drug it must be paid for by the patient, as the executive council is under no obligation to provide it.

"Hycal is described by the manufacturers as a high carbohydrate preparation based on liquid glucose B.P.C. The preparation, in our opinion, could have had no therapeutic effect on the disease from which the patient was suffering; it was essentially a food. We accordingly decide that this Hycal was not a drug which the executive council was bound to provide."

### Complan

In another case before the referees the Secretary of State appealed against a decision of a local medical committee that Complan prescribed for a patient with epilepsy and anorexia nervosa was a drug the executive council should provide.

The prescribing doctor told the referees that the patient showed signs of malnutrition with possible vitamin deficiency. He had regarded the Complan not only as a food but as a drug by virtue of its vitamin content.

The referees were unable on the evidence to accept that the patient was suffering from such a degree of avitaminosis as to require special treatment, and even if the patient

did require such treatment Complan was not, in their view, an adequate or satisfactory method of making good the vitamin deficiency. They were of the opinion that the preparation was essentially a food, and therefore not a drug the executive council was bound to provide.

### Protein-free Bread

A doctor appealed to the referees against a decision of a local medical committee that protein-free bread prescribed for a patient suspected of suffering from gluten-sensitive enteropathy was not a drug the executive council was bound to provide. While in hospital the patient concerned had been tentatively diagnosed as having Crohn's disease. Subsequent investigations were inconclusive, but the referees decided that a gluten-sensitive enteropathy could have existed and in such circumstances a therapeutic trial of a gluten-protein-free bread was justified.

### Barrier Cream

In another case a chemist had supplied Rosalex barrier cream against a prescription for barrier cream, and the local medical committee decided it was not a drug which the executive council should provide. The prescribing doctor appealed on the grounds that the patient concerned suffered from chronic dry eczema which was aggravated by a substance present on the glass bottles he handled on the production line at his job. The barrier cream protected the patient's hands from the irritant and enabled him to remain at work.

The referees concluded that "the barrier

cream constituted an effective prophylactic," and on the facts of the case (but not without some hesitation) decided that "this Rosalex barrier cream was a drug which the executive council was bound to provide."

### Deodorant

Saltair No-Roma deodorant was prescribed for a woman patient who had an ileostomy after a colectomy for ulcerative colitis. The doctor, who appealed against an adverse decision by the local medical committee, pointed out that this deodorant was intended for ileostomy patients. The preparation had been prescribed to save the patient, a fastidious woman, aged 43, from mental distress and to prevent her from feeling a social outcast.

The referees considered the deodorant to be a cosmetic but, since it was used to alleviate or prevent mental illness, they allowed that Saltair No-Roma deodorant was a drug which the executive council was bound to provide.

### Polytar Shampoo

A woman patient suffering from pityriasis sica of the scalp was prescribed Polytar shampoo. Her doctor appealed against a local committee decision that this was not a drug the executive council was bound to provide. The referees agreed that Polytar shampoo (ordinarily known as Polytar liquid) was an accepted treatment for this complaint and found in favour of the prescribing doctor.

## Association Notices

### Armed Forces Committee: Nomination of Members for Co-option.

The constitution of the Armed Forces Committee allows for the co-option of two representatives, of the rank of major or equivalent (lieutenant-commander or squadron leader) or below, one of whom should preferably be of specialist status, from the medical branch of each of the Services. Last session the following members were co-opted:

#### Royal Navy

Surgeon Lieutenant-Commander A. L. Revell (Eastbourne)  
Surgeon Lieutenant-Commander D. S. Wright (now serving overseas)

#### Army

Captain C. M. Chabrel (London)  
Major W. E. Forsythe-Jauch (London)

#### Royal Air Force

Squadron Leader D. Bevan (Rutland)  
Squadron Leader M. W. Slight (Halton)  
Serving medical officers are now invited to nominate members of the Association in the armed Forces in the above mentioned ranks for co-option to the Committee. Retiring members are eligible for re-appointment, provided their rank is not above that of major or equivalent.

Nominations should be sent to the Secretary of the Association by Monday 31 August 1970. The meeting of the Armed Forces Committee, at which co-opted members will be appointed, will be held in the autumn and after it nominees will be informed of the appointments made.

DEREK STEVENSON,  
Secretary.

### Diary of Central Meetings

#### JULY

- 22 Wed. Consulting Pathologists Group Committee, 2.15 p.m.
- 23 Thurs. Working Party on the Use of Fetal Material (Board of Science and Education), 10 a.m.
- 24 Fri. Armed Forces Committee, 2.30 p.m.
- 28 Tues. Joint Consultants Committee (at Royal College of Physicians of London), 10 a.m.

#### SEPTEMBER

- 30 Wed. Scottish Joint Consultants Committee (at 7 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh), 10.15 a.m.

### Branch and Division Meetings to be Held

EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR HOSPITAL MEDICAL SERVICES.—At Bell Hotel, Thetford, Monday, 20 July, 8.30 p.m., annual general meeting.

### Correction

**Non-consultant Grade.**—A speech in the debate at the Annual Representative Meeting on a motion by Exeter, "That there should be a permanent non-consultant career grade . . ." (*Supplement*, 4 July, p. 17), was wrongly attributed (p. 18) in the report of the proceedings to Dr. A. J. ROWE (West Norfolk). Dr. Rowe did not speak in the debate on this motion or the amendment to it. We regret this mistake.