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# Medical Ethics

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**Nurses should be partners not handmaidens –  
medical paternalism towards them is ‘outmoded’**

*Jenifer Wilson-Barnett*

**Ethical problems of emptying mental hospitals  
even in the name of ‘community care’**

*Stephen Pattison and Paul Armitage*

**The rights and wrongs of aborting fetuses  
because they are female – a conference report**

*Bernard M Dickens*

**Medical confidentiality is ‘an intransigent  
and absolute obligation’**

*Michael H Kottow*

**Plus:** Patients’ wants versus patients’ interests ● **Debate:** Can paternalism be modernised? ● **Editorial:** Nursing ethics and medical ethics ● **Words:** ‘Medical ethics’ – an alternative approach ● **Case conference:** Drunken drivers – what should doctors do? ● **Book reviews** ● **Correspondence** ● **Medical groups**