

medicine to be in some absolute sense 'wrong', but rather that they think their own wants and values to be disregarded because of what one might call professional or administrative pressure – that is, the (understandable) desire to maintain some *single* set of standards which will apply to all medical practice. Certainly abuses have to be guarded against: but here again, in the light of what I have said, what is to count as 'abuse' must be negotiated rather than presumed. The position with psychotherapy is much looser: patients often make very different deals (overt or tacit) with different brands of therapists, and there seems nothing wrong with that. Perhaps this is something that could be extended into the area of physical health. But in order to get clear about the possible types of contract which could reasonably be offered, both doctors and patients would have to be clearer than I, at least, would claim to be about what their wants and values actually are. There is an interesting comparison here with marriage: many people nowadays do not go along with many versions of public and official marriage contracts, and attempt to negotiate

something with their partner which better represents the wants of the two parties. Here the wants, fears and other emotions of human beings are even more obscure than they are in regard to health; but that, fortunately, is outside the scope of this paper.

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## Obituary

### Sir Desmond Pond

Sir Desmond Pond, who died on 29 June at the age of 66, has a special place in the development of the study of medical ethics in the UK. In the early days of the London Medical Group he gave detailed help in identifying appropriate lecturers, not only psychiatrists, thus ensuring a high academic standard for the programme of lectures and symposia. He served on the Consultative Council of the London Medical Group from 1968 to 1976, and was a member of the Governing Body of the Institute of Medical Ethics and the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Medical Ethics* at the time of his death.

For the past two years he was chairman of a working party, appointed by the Institute and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, on methods of teaching medical ethics to medical students. Although he was unable to attend the final meeting, he had approved previously the working party's recommendations, which will be published later this year as the *Pond Report on Teaching Medical Ethics*.

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