

# The Journal of the Institute of Medical Ethics

The *Journal of Medical Ethics* was established in 1975, with a multidisciplinary editorial board, to promote the study of contemporary medico-moral problems. The editorial board has as its aims the encouragement of a high academic standard for this ever-developing subject and the enhancement of professional and public discussion. The journal is published quarterly and includes papers on all aspects of health care ethics, analyses ethical concepts and theories and features case conferences and comment on clinical practice. Intermittent series focus on the **Teaching of medical ethics**; on the medico-moral problems directly experienced by health care workers (**At the coalface**); on the pursuit of arguments prompted by papers in the journal (**Debate**); on medical ethics in literature (**Medical ethics and literature**); and on briefly argued often unorthodox opinions related to medical ethics (**Point of view**). The journal also contains book reviews and letters.

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## Submitting manuscripts for publication

Papers submitted for publication should be sent in quadruplicate to: The Editor, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, c/o Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, 14 Prince's Gardens, London SW7 1NA. Rejected manuscripts are not returned. Papers should be in double-spaced typewriting on one side of the paper only. The preferred maximum length of papers is 3,500 words – absolute maximum 5,500 (including references). A total word count (including references) is requested. On a separate sheet some brief biographical details should be supplied, including the title of the author's present post, degrees and/or professional qualifications, (if any) and any other relevant information.

Four copies of the journal will be sent to authors free of charge after their papers are published. Offprints of individual papers may be bought from *Journal of Medical Ethics*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR.

In March 1981 the *JME* adopted a simplified 'Vancouver style' for references: details are given in various issues, including December 1990. They are also available from the editorial office. The full text of the 'Vancouver Agreement' was published in the *British Medical Journal* in 1982; volume 284; 1766–70. As the 'Vancouver style' is incompatible with the long established style of references for legal articles, lawyers should use their own standard style, but try to facilitate reference by others. The journal is multidisciplinary and papers should be in clear jargon-free English, accessible to any intelligent reader.

## Notice to subscribers

The *Journal of Medical Ethics* is published quarterly. The annual subscription rates are £49.00 in the United Kingdom and Irish Republic, and £64.00 in all countries overseas. US direct \$109.00, airmail \$124.00. Payment for overseas subscriptions should be made in sterling, payable to Professional and Scientific Publications/JME A/c. Orders can also be placed locally with any leading subscription agent or bookseller. (For the convenience of readers in the USA subscription orders, with or without payment, can also be sent to: Professional and Scientific Publications, *British Medical Journal*, Box No 560B, Kennebunkport, Maine 04046.) All enquiries regarding air mail rates, single copies, advertisements, etc. should be sent to: *Journal of Medical Ethics*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR.

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## News and notes

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### Third International Congress on Psychiatry, Law and Ethics

The Third International Congress on Psychiatry, Law and Ethics will be held in Jerusalem from the 4th to the 7th of November, 1991 and the organisers, The Society for Medicine and Law in Israel, are now calling for papers.

For preparation instructions please contact: The Congress Secretariat, Stier Group Ltd, 109A Ben Yehuda St, Tel Aviv, Israel. Fax: 03-247782. Telephone: 03-224153.

### Methodological and ethical issues in clinical trials

A conference on methodological and ethical issues in clinical trials will be held at the London School of Economics on Thursday and Friday June 27 and 28 this year.

The conference is being organised by the LSE Centre for the Philosophy of the Natural and Social Sciences and the Royal Statistical Society (Medical Section).

**Conference themes:** A conventional approach to clinical trial design emphasises randomisation, predetermined sample sizes and prespecified plans for interim and early stopping. Corresponding statistical analysis is rooted in the frequentist theory of statistical inference, including tests of significance and confidence intervals. An alternative approach based on Bayes's theorem, if accepted, would have profound implications for the way clinical trials are being conducted. For example, unlike most

frequentist statisticians, many Bayesian statisticians would continuously monitor trial results and would stop a trial early whenever the point seemed proved. Also some Bayesians would question the need for randomisation, and would prefer traditional significance levels to be replaced by Bayesian probability statements which can be used as a basis for future clinical decisions.

Many Bayesians argue that conventional, randomised trials may subject patients to unnecessary and inferior treatments and often claim their methods are more efficient and economic. On the other hand, statisticians of the frequentist school defend their methods as being more objective, unbiased and scientifically acceptable. In addition to this statistical controversy, there are many other important ethical and philosophical considerations in the practice of clinical trials.

The conference aims to bring together statisticians, philosophers of science and clinicians to examine these issues concerning the design, interpretation and ethics of clinical trials.

**Participants:** Participants will include: Professor Peter Armitage (Oxford), Professor Donald Berry (Minnesota), Professor Sir David Cox (Oxford), Professor Stephen Evans (London), Dr Colin Howson (London), Professor Peter Freeman (Leicester), Professor Dennis Lindley (London), Professor Paul Meier (Chicago), Professor Stuart Pocock (London), Professor Kenneth Schaffner (Pittsburgh), Dr Stephen Senn (Ciba-Geigy, Basel), Dr David Spiegelhalter (Cambridge), Dr Peter Urbach (London), Dr John Whitehead (Reading).

**The registration fee** (including lunches, refreshments and a reception) is £30. Some bursaries for postgraduate students, to cover overnight

accommodation and part or all of the registration fee are available. Accommodation can be arranged at university halls of residence.

For further information please contact, as soon as possible: Clinical Trials Conference, Centre for Philosophy of the Natural and Social Sciences, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE.

### Cocaine as a Biological and Medical Problem

A one-day symposium on Cocaine as a Biological and Medical Problem will be held at the Royal Society of Medicine, London on Tuesday 23 July this year.

The symposium will consider the subject under two headings: Physiology and pharmacology of cocaine and Treatment of cocaine abuse.

Under the first heading topics covered will include: Historical perspective of the use of cocaine; Molecular pharmacology of cocaine; Pharmacotherapy for cocaine dependence; Animal studies of self-administration, and Human studies of self-administration.

Treatment of cocaine abuse will cover such areas as: Integrated approaches to treatment; How toxic is cocaine?; Cocaine research in the USA: current priorities and future prospects, and Cocaine: finding the way forward.

The conference is being organised by the Royal Society in conjunction with the CIBA Foundation.

For full programme and registration details please contact: Fiona Morris, Symposium Executive, The Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8AE. Tel: 071 408 2119. Fax: 071 355 3197.

## The Christian Stake in Bioethics

An international conference on The Christian Stake in Bioethics will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland from August 21-24, 1991.

Contributors will include Professor Harold O J Brown, of the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, USA; Luke Gormally, Director of the Linacre Centre for Health Care Ethics, London; Dr Henk Jochemsen, Director of the Lindeboom Institute, Ede, Holland and Dr John Keown, Director of the Centre for Health Care Law at the University of Leicester.

The conference is being organised in conjunction with *Ethics and Medicine*. Inquiries to: The Secretary, International Conference on Bioethics, *Ethics and Medicine*, 17 Claremont Park, Edinburgh EH6 7PJ, Scotland, UK. Fax: 031 555 1002. Telephone: 031 554 1206.

*Ethics and Medicine*, which offers a forum for Christian perspectives on bioethics, is published three times a year. For subscription information please contact: Rutherford House, 17 Claremont Park, Edinburgh EH6 7PJ, Scotland, UK. Fax: 031 555 1002.

## Tennent Caledonian and Royal Bank of Scotland Research Fellowships 1992-93

Applications are invited for these Research Fellowships for the academic session 1992-93.

The fellowships are intended primarily, though not exclusively, for philosophers and political theorists on study leave from their own universities or colleges. Appointment is normally for one term and the fellowship carries a travel allowance, accommodation in St Andrews, a room in the Department of Moral Philosophy, and access to word-processing facilities. Further details are available from the Director, Dr John Haldane, Centre for Philosophy and Public Affairs, University of St Andrews.

Applications, including a cv, a short statement of research intentions or plans, and an indication of the term during which the fellowship would be held should be submitted no later than 29 November 1990 to: The Director of Personnel Services, College Gate, University of St Andrews, North Street, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9AJ, Scotland, UK.

## 4th International Congress on Ethics in Medicine

The 4th International Congress on Ethics in Medicine will be held from the 13th to the 18th of October, 1991 at the Ma'ale Hahamisha Kibbutz Hotel just outside of Jerusalem.

Speakers will include: George Annas, Boston University, USA; S R Benatar, University of Cape Town, South Africa; Tom Beauchamp, Georgetown University, USA; Raanan Gillon, Institute of Medical Ethics, UK; Grant Gillett, University of Otago, New Zealand; Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, Chief Rabbi, UK; Joanne Lynn, George Washington University, USA; W E Seideman, McMaster University, Canada; Arthur Schafer, University of Manitoba, Canada; Alan Weisbard, University of Wisconsin, USA; Richard West, Institute of Medical Ethics, UK.

Topics covered will include: Medical ethics on the battlefield and in times of insurrection; Definition of death; Voluntary active euthanasia; The legacy of the holocaust; Research ethics committees; Ethical perspectives in nursing, and Philosophical and ideological bases for bioethics.

If you are interested in attending please contact: The Congress Secretariat, Medical Ethics Congress, Te'um Congress Organisers, POB 8388, Jerusalem, Israel. Tel: 972 2 667402, Fax: 972 2 637572, Telex: 25628 TEUMJ IL.

## Medical groups

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8 Bassett Close,  
Southampton SO2 3FP

Medical groups associated with the Institute of Medical Ethics have been established in British university teaching hospitals. Each academic year they arrange programmes of lectures and symposia on issues raised by the practice of medicine which concern other disciplines. Although these programmes are addressed primarily to medical, nursing and other hospital students they are open to all members of the medical, nursing and allied professions. There is no fee for attendance. Lecture lists are available by direct application to the appropriate co-ordinating secretary named above. A stamped addressed A4 envelope would be appreciated.

# Institute of Medical Ethics

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The Institute of Medical Ethics is an organisation for research, education and information in the broad area of health care ethics. It is financed by grants from charitable bodies, government sources and members' subscriptions.

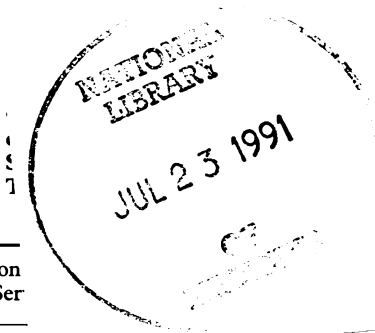
It was established as the Society for the Study of Medical Ethics, and is an independent, non-partisan organisation for the dispassionate multidisciplinary study of medico-moral issues raised by the practice of medicine.

The institute aims to help improve the quality of both professional and public discussion of medico-moral questions; to promote the study of medical ethics; to promote high academic standards for this developing subject; to encourage a multidisciplinary approach to discussion of the consequences of clinical practice; to stimulate research into specific problems, and to remain non-partisan and independent of all interest groups and lobbies.

Institute reports include: *The Ethics of Resource Allocation in Health Care* by Kenneth Boyd, on ethical issues arising from scarcity of health care resources; *Dilemmas of Dying* by Ian Thompson, on ethical issues arising in the care of the dying, both published by the Edinburgh University Press; *Medical Research with Children: Ethics, Law and Practice* by Richard Nicholson, an analysis of the ethics of clinical research investigations on children, published by the Oxford University Press; *Life Before Birth - the Search for a Consensus on Abortion and the Treatment of Infertility* by Kenneth Boyd, Brendan Callaghan and Edward Shotter, published by SPCK, and *The Pond Report on the Teaching of Medical Ethics*, which was published directly for the institute.

Among shorter recent institute reports are: Assisted Death, *Lancet*, 1990 and HIV infection: the ethics of anonymised testing and of testing pregnant women, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 1990, both written by the institute's Research Director, Kenneth Boyd, on behalf of institute working parties.

The institute derives from the London Medical Group, a student group for the study of ethical issues raised by the practice of medicine which, beginning in 1963, arranged a comprehensive programme of lectures and symposia on such issues. Similar groups associated with the institute are now established in university teaching hospitals at Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Oxford, Sheffield and Southampton.



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