

Health Bill to work smoothly. In particular please note the above paragraph on resources contained under the Section of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services.

Concerns and advice

1. We would advise that under the Health Board Act 1989 the terminology 'mental handicap' was changed to 'intellectual disability'.
2. Informed consent
 - (a) Both the adult 'mentally handicapped' and some elderly patients such as those with dementia are unable to give 'informed consent' to undergo various psychiatric and medical/surgical treatments. Many will be in 'approved centres' and although deemed 'voluntary admission' they are *de facto* detained as they have not the capacity to have given their informed consent.
 - (b) We advise that the Mental Health Commission would have
3. Advocacy system

Consideration for a system of advocates, independent of the mental health services, for patients both involuntary, detained and *de facto* detained would be welcomed.
4. Advance directives

Consideration might also be given to issues posed by the use of 'advance directives'.
5. Approved centres

The College is concerned that a number of facilities may not be suitable to be registered 'approved'. This applies

responsibility for monitoring psychiatric care and treatment of all psychiatric in-patients, (even though they are not 'legally detained') both voluntary and detained as the rights of voluntary and *de facto* detained patients are not addressed.

- (c) The role of the Inspector of Mental Health Services should be widened to monitor all residential health centres where patients with mental disorders are receiving medical treatment without 'informed consent'.

6. Northern Ireland reciprocal arrangements

The College is concerned that Paragraph 11.19 of the White Paper has not been included in the Bill. This paragraph suggested new legislation would provide the closest possible coordination of the two systems of law for the detention of those with a mental disorder and need for treatment of these patients between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In view of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and North/South bodies perhaps this omission could be rectified.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND (1995) *A New Mental Health Act 1995. White Paper.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

G. Johnston Calvert Chairman, submitted on behalf of the Royal College of Psychiatrists Irish Division, 123 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2

forthcoming events

The Professional Education & Training Unit (PET), University of Southampton are the organisers of the following conferences: **Innovations, treatment and care**, the National Association of Psychiatric Intensive Care Units Annual Conference, will be held on 31 August–1 September 2000 at King Alfred's College, Winchester; **Psychosis and spirituality: exploring the new frontier** will be held on 7–8 September 2000 at the Marwell Hotel, near Winchester; **Section 12(2) Mental Health Act 1983 refresher day**, a conference for Section 12(2) approved doctors, will be held on 1 November 2000 at The Royal Beach Hotel, Portsmouth; and **Current treatments and care for sex offenders: a matter of public concern** will take place on 10 November 2000 at Winchester Guildhall. Further information about all the events: Mr David K. Beck, PET Unit Director, Mental Health Group, University of Southampton, Royal South Hants Hospital, Southampton SO14 0YG (tel: 023 8082 5543; e-mail: dkb@soton.ac.uk; website: <http://groups.medschool.soton.ac.uk/mentalhealth/>).

Dr H. Birchall, Consultant Psychiatrist in Eating Disorders, Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust, is the organiser of a four-day workshop on **Interpersonal psychotherapy**, being held on 2 October 2000 at the Leicester General Hospital. Further information: Mina Patel, George Hine House, Towers Hospital, Leicester LE5 0TD (tel: 0116 2256577).

The Institute of Health & Community Studies (IHCS), Bournemouth University would like to announce **Qualitative research in health and social care 2000**, a conference taking place on 25–27 October 2000 in Bournemouth. Further information: Miss Sam Williams, Administrative Assistant, IHCS, Bournemouth University, Royal London House, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 3LT (tel: 01202 504 196).

Professor R. N. Mohan, Consultant in Old Age Psychiatry and Clinical Tutor, Northern Birmingham Mental Health NHS Trust is the organiser of a two-day **management course** targeted at specialist registrars in psychiatry. The course will take place on 28–29 November 2000 at the

Birmingham Medical Institute. Further information: Mrs Denise Makepeace (tel: 0121 685 6574).

Manchester course for recently appointed consultants. This course will bring together 20–25 consultants appointed within the previous two years. The aim of the course is to identify problems and stresses of life as a consultant and to find ways of coping with these. The course format is interactive, with experienced consultants acting as facilitators. Main sessions are: How do I spend my time? Help – the buck stops here! The problems faced by an experienced consultant; Managing the multi-disciplinary team; and Balancing our time and our needs. The course was described enthusiastically in the *Psychiatric Bulletin* in 1996 (May, **20**, 292–294). The course will run on 7–8 December 2000. Further information: Mrs Wendy Clarke, Secretary to Professor Francis Creed, Rawnsley Building, Manchester Royal Infirmary, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9WL (tel: 0161 276 5331; fax: 0161 273 2135; e-mail: francis.creed@man.ac.uk; web site: www.man.ac.uk/psych/events.html).