



columns

- (a) an original article on a psychiatric topic of approximately 1000 words, aimed at the general public and suitable for publication in a regional newspaper, lay journal or on the internet; or
- (b) an article on a psychiatric topic of approximately 1000 words, aimed at the general public and published in the past year (between May and April annually) in a regional newspaper, lay journal or on the internet; or
- (c) an article on a psychiatric topic of approximately 1000 words, aimed at the general public and commissioned by the Public Education Committee for publication in a regional newspaper, lay journal or on the internet.

Entries will be judged on their readability, originality and newsworthiness by designated members of the College's Public Education Committee. Entries must be submitted in typescript only, indicating the target publication/audience (e.g. regional newspaper). Entries for the prize must be submitted to the Head of External Affairs at the College by 1 May of each year.

A request from Professor Stafford Lightman

'Over the past year or so I have been helping set up a postgraduate M.Med programme at the University of Mbarara

in Uganda. This is an extremely interesting medical school as it is set up as a community-based medical school, which is extremely appropriate for the medical problems of this part of the world. One of the areas that has been a great success has been in transcultural psychiatry. There was an extremely good Dutch psychiatrist who, among other things, formed an extremely close association with the traditional healers in the area and also set up some very good training programmes for people dealing with victims of African disasters. This lady has now had to go back to Holland. . . I feel that there is an enormous opportunity for working at Mbarara and I suspect there must be people who would be enthusiastic about the opportunity of going there.'

If there is any psychiatrist who would like to take on this very interesting challenge please contact Professor S. Lightman, University of Bristol, University Research Centre for Neuroendocrinology, Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin Laboratories, Bristol Royal Infirmary, Marlborough Street, Bristol BS2 8HW.

People's Voice for Health campaign launches The People's Challenge

The UK's leading health care charities are joining forces for the first time to launch

the People's Voice for Health (PV4H) campaign to challenge all health providers to commit to real change and to put patients at the heart of the NHS now.

The PV4H campaign is a direct response to the Government's NHS Plan. It acknowledges that the Government's recent modernisation of the NHS Plan was a step in the right direction and it welcomed the proposed patient involvement at national, health authority and local level. The People's Challenge asks health providers to sign up to three key statements that commit to a comprehensive NHS, available and accessible to all. Importantly, they are also asked to demonstrate their commitment by naming a new patient-centred initiative they will undertake as they move towards a more people orientated service.

PV4H has set up a website (<http://www.pv4h.org.uk>) to enable health organisations and professionals to sign up immediately and to give details of their initiatives. In addition, the campaign is distributing thousands of the The People's Challenge cards across the country for signing and return. The general public is also encouraged to register support on the website, by letter or by calling 020 7813 3645.

forthcoming events

The teaching unit of the Department of Forensic Psychiatry at the **Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London**, is organising a 1-day course principally aimed at trainee psychiatrists at senior house officer or specialist registrar grades. Entitled **Mental Disorder, Violence and Risk**, the course will take place on 16 January 2001, between 9.45a.m. and 4.15p.m. at the Institute of Psychiatry. The programme will outline the theoretical issues as well as examine the clinical context of this important area. The speakers, who are all experts in the field, include Professor John Gunn, Dr Mike Shooter and Professor Pamela Taylor. For further information about the course please contact Mrs Carol Double, Department of Forensic Psychiatry, Institute of Psychiatry, De Crespigny Park, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AF; tel: 020 7848 0122; fax: 020 7848 0754; e-mail: c.double@iop.kcl.ac.uk.

Mole conferences would like to announce the following two conferences:

Personality Disorders: Mad, Bad or just Misunderstood. A 1-day conference to be held at Regents College on 15

March 2001, convened by Dr Gwen Adshead, Honorary Senior Lecturer and Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry at Broadmoor Hospital and the Traumatic Stress Clinic.

The personality disorder diagnosis can give rise to problems and debate; both professional and political. The conference will look at the realities of working with patients given this diagnosis. Speakers with extensive experience in the field will review assessment, research and treatment issues. The conference will also look at the impact on staff working with potentially demanding groups. Whatever the Government plans for this group, mental health services will be involved at different levels. The conference will be of interest to different practitioners of mental health care.

Dual Diagnosis is a 1-day conference to be held at the Institute of Physics on 30 March 2001, convened by Dr Ken Chęcinski, Senior Lecturer in Addictive Behaviour at St George's Hospital Medical School.

For further information concerning either conference contact Mole Conferences, 26 Church Road, Portslade,

Brighton BN41 1LA; tel: 01273 242 634; fax: 01273 235 095; e-mail: enquiries@mole-conferences.com.

The 9th International Congress on Dermatology and Psychiatry, 'Pointing the Way', will be held on 22-24 March 2001. The Congress will focus on the collaborative team approach of dermatologists, psychiatrists and psychologists in recognising and helping patients who have skin disorders. The Congress will be held in the Hotel Princesa Sofia, Plaza Pio IX, 4 08028 Barcelona, Spain. The conference will be presented both in English and Spanish. For further information please contact Mrs Elena Lagalante, Department of Dermatology, Hospital Clinic, Villarroel 170, 08036 Barcelona, Spain; tel: +34 932275438; fax: +34 934177335; e-mail: elagalante@compuserve.com.

The 9th Manchester course in liaison psychiatry will be held 4-8 June 2001. This is an intensive week-long course in liaison psychiatry. It is most suitable for newly appointed consultants and specialist registrars. Emphasis is placed upon small group teaching and workshops.