

Research and audit

We gave the hot news last month of final arrangements for funding the RITA 2 (Randomised Intervention for Treatment of Angina 2), trial with the principal contributions from the British Heart Foundation and the Medical Research Council. The Society had supported the feasibility and pilot studies. We now have more information on successful applications for two other projects that involve the British Cardiac Society; these are related to our audit activities. Funding is coming from the Department of Health through the research unit of the Royal College of Physicians that is directed by Dr Anthony Hopkins. (Our own committee is managed jointly with the Cardiology Committee of the College). The scrutiny of delays from the onset of symptoms to receipt of thrombolysis has been managed very successfully by John Birkhead. The results of the pilot study involving six hospitals will be published in the *British Medical Journal*, and the audit committee now intends to expand it to 25 centres. These may change from time to time depending on the total duration of the project. The purpose of the audit—mentioned in a recent newsletter—is to allow hospitals to make anonymous comparisons of their own performance in the utilisation of thrombolytic therapy with that of other centres. The pilot study showed that this can be a powerful stimulus to improvement. The observations are relatively simple and will have little impact on the work load of nurses and junior medical staff, but they add interest to routine work. Several hospitals have already applied to join the scheme. Application can be made directly to John Birkhead at the General Hospital, Billing Road, Northampton NN1 5BD. The second project that will be funded is the valuable Confidential Enquiry into Complications of Cardiac Catheterisation (CECCC), which has already expanded its activity under the direction of David de Bono.

Plants in Cardiology

How many members at Harrogate saw the elegant monograph based on the series in the *British Heart Journal* by Arthur Hollman on *Plants in Cardiology*? It was on the Journal stand as a new BMJ publication, but perhaps not prominently displayed because we at least missed it... There can be few members of the Society who would not wish to have a copy. The author is known to most of us, but it seems appropriate to reproduce part of what is written on the back cover. "Dr Hollman is a cardiologist who is also a keen amateur botanist, a Fellow of the Linnean Society, and a member of the Committee of Management of the Chelsea Physic Garden. He has woven medical and botanical information into suc-

cinct and elegantly written articles. Written primarily for cardiologist, his book will also be valued by everyone interested in nature's contribution to medicine, including doctors, pharmacists, botanist, herbalists, and medical historians. A glossary explains the most commonly occurring drug names and medical conditions for the non-technical reader. With its full page illustrations of plants reproduced from original sources such as Gerard's seventeenth century *Herball* and Bentley's and Trimen's nineteenth century *Medicinal Plants*, this is a beautiful record of cardiological discovery." Indeed it is. Copies (ISBN 0-7279-0744-1) can be obtained from the BMJ Publishing Group, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR, or from all medical bookshops including the BMJ bookshop at BMA House (071 383 6185). The price of £5.95 includes postage. Publication may not have gone ahead without modest support from the Society, but we are confident that the book will be popular and that our investment will be justly rewarded.

Cardiology in Europe

This is the first of regular news items concerning cardiology in Europe from Philip-Poole-Wilson. "Links, exchanges, and friendships have increased substantially over the last two decades between cardiologists in Europe and Britain. These interactions will become more common with the greater freedom of movement for doctors that will begin in 1993.

The rapid expansion of the European Society of Cardiology began in the 1970s but accelerated when the Congresses became an annual event after the Vienna meeting of 1988. Previously they had been held every four years. The European Society is made up of the National Societies of 32 countries that stretch from the Atlantic to the Urals, and from Northern Norway to the Mediterranean. All members of national societies are members of the European Society through their links with a Working Group. The British Cardiac Society is well represented within the Working Groups and other committees of the European Society of Cardiology.

This year the annual congress takes place in Barcelona from 30 August to 3 September. Almost 7000 abstracts were received, an increase of 25% on the figure for 1991. In future, attempts will be made to increase the acceptance rate to more than 30%. The United Kingdom was third, behind Germany and Italy, in the number of abstracts submitted; second, behind Germany, in the number accepted; and first in the proportion that were accepted. This gratifying position is not one that we have always achieved in past years.

The dates and venues of future congresses of the European Society of Cardiology are:

1993 Nice, 29 August to 2 September; 1994 Berlin, 10 to 14 September (a World congress, in conjunction with the International Society and Federation of Cardiology (ISFC)); 1995 Amsterdam, 20 to 24 August; 1996 Birmingham, 25 to 29 August; 1997 Stockholm, 24 to 28 August.

The closing date for abstracts is always 14 February except for 1994 when the closing date will be 1 December 1993. Attempts are being made to avoid the last two weeks of August. But the congress is now so large that the availability of venues for the congress has become a major problem. The goal is for the congress to take place during the first half of September, but this will not be achieved for several years."

News of colleagues

New appointments to consultant posts include Oliver Ormerod at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Christopher Travill at the Luton and Dunstable, and Adeniyi Molajo at Leigh Hospital in Wigan. We have heard with regret of the death on 4 April of Professor Albrecht Fleckenstein.

Reminders for diaries

The first in the series of the Society's Workshops will be on Preventive Cardiology on 14 October, organised by David Wood, and the teach-in on "Emerging Concepts in Atherogenesis" on 10 November is being arranged by Michael Davies. These will both be at Fitzroy Square. Finally, the British Cardiac Society and the Resuscitation Council of the United Kingdom (now more closely associated with us at 9 Fitzroy Square) both have an interest in "Resuscitation 92" in Brighton Conference Centre on 20 and 21 November. Application for all three can be made to the Society.

DOUGLAS CHAMBERLAIN
President, British Cardiac Society
DUNCAN DYMOND
Secretary, British Cardiac Society
9 Fitzroy Square
London W1P 5AH

NOTICE

The 1993 Annual Meeting of the **British Cardiac Society** will take place at the Wembley Conference Centre from 18 to 21 May.