



**Dealing with the
“sick hospital” syndrome**

p 100



Conditioning for rural practice

pp 101, 106



Surfing the Net for drugs

pp 103, 118



EDITORIALS

The “Cam affair”: an isolated incident or destined to be repeated?
Martin B Van Der Weyden 100

Training our future rural medical workforce
Susan M Wearne, John Wakerman 101

E-drug deals: part of the Wild West world of e-commerce
Alan J Gijbers, Gregory Whelan 103

The continuing legacy of the United Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study
Timothy ME Davis, Stephen Colagiuri 104

RESEARCH

A case for more year-long internships outside metropolitan areas?
Hedley G Peach, Maxine Trembath, Bernie Fensling 106

Causes of sudden cardiac death in young Australians
Alessandra Doolan, Neil Langlois, Christopher Semsarian 110

Back for more: a qualitative study of emergency department reattendance for asthma
Dianne P Goeman, Rosalie A Aroni, Susan M Sawyer, Kay Stewart, Francis C K Thien, Michael J Abramson, Jo A Douglass 113

FOR DEBATE

Overseas-based online pharmacies: a source of supply for illicit drug users?
Bernard N St George, Joseph R Emmanuel, Kate L Middleton 118

DIAGNOSTIC DILEMMAS

Palpable purpura, polyarthritis and abdominal pain
Surabhi Mukhopadhyay, Soha Mousa, Biby R George, Andras Perl 121

MEDICINE AND THE LAW

Failed sterilisations and the unwanted child: a new medicolegal minefield?
Paul Gerber 123

EBM: TRIALS ON TRIAL

Should smokers be referred to a smoking-cessation clinic before undergoing elective surgery?
Paul S Myles 126

Making sense of trial results: outcomes and estimation
Rachel L O’Connell, Val J Gebski, Anthony C Keech 128

MJA PRACTICE ESSENTIALS: ENDOCRINOLOGY

4: Polycystic ovary syndrome
Robert J Norman, Ruijin Wu, Marcin T Stankiewicz 132

LETTERS (Contents overleaf) 139

MARKETING MEDICINE

Just before Christmas 2003, I received the following email:

"Dear Martin, ... Re: HEALTHY 25% DISCOUNT ON HEART SCAN FOR YOU AND YOUR EXECUTIVE TEAM. Give yourself and your executive team an early Christmas present this year or help them make a New Year's resolution that is easy to keep. Either way, our 25% discount on heart scan appointments before 31 January 2004 is a healthy gift. A heart scan is normally \$415 including GST."

A prominent executive endorsed the offer, saying, "I have had a heart scan and so has my wife. You owe it to yourself and your family." It went on to give contact details of a company offering heart and body scanning.

Such targeted marketing, long a tactic in the commercial world, is now on the march in medicine. The benefits of virtual colonoscopy and body scans are aggressively marketed to the "worried well". Cures for sexual dysfunction or miraculous repair of visual defects enjoy similar paid publicity. Some would say, why not? It is the consumer's right to choose and buy in a free market!

However, the growth in direct medical advertising has occurred without being widely debated in the community or within the profession. This is in stark contrast to the recent vigorous debate on direct advertising of pharmaceuticals to consumers.

Some would argue that medical advertising is adequately controlled by legislation, such as the *Trade Practices Act 1974*, which prohibits misleading or deceptive advertising, unconscionable conduct and misrepresentation.

But has medicine now been reduced to a trade bound by trade precepts?

Has not the time come for our professional bodies to tackle direct medical advertising? National guidelines, developed and endorsed by our profession, are the least we should expect.

Martin B Van Der Weyden

LETTERS

Multicentre research: negotiating the ethics approval obstacle course	
Lynne M Roberts, Lucy Bowyer, Caroline S Homer, Mark A Brown	139
Surveillance for Barrett's oesophagus: if you do it, do it properly	
Gautam Ramnath, Peter Bampton	139
Lessons from early large-scale adoption of celecoxib and rofecoxib by Australian general practitioners	
Mark R Nelson	140
Effect of computerised prescribing on use of antibiotics	
Ian D Coombes, Danielle A Stowasser, Charles A Mitchell, Paul Varghese	140
Palliative care: new guidelines for psychosocial care	
Jane Turner, Brian McAvoy, Karen Luxford, Jane Fletcher	141
Tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) for acute ischaemic stroke: why so much has been made of so little	
David J Blacker	142
Jerome R Hoffman	142
Heart failure: how can we prevent the epidemic?	
Matthew T Naughton, Darren R Mansfield, David M Kaye, Peter Bergin, Meroula Richardson	143
Duncan J Campbell	143
Pet owners and risk factors in cardiovascular disease	
Balakrishnan R Nair, Brendan Flynn	144
Michael McDonnell	144

BOOK REVIEWS

Pocket guide to diagnostic tests. Australian edition	
<i>Reviewed by Eva Raik</i>	120
Caring for lesbian and gay people: a clinical guide	
<i>Reviewed by Gary D Rogers</i>	120

OBITUARY

Walter Monz	
<i>by John A Comerford</i>	130

IN THIS ISSUE . . . 99

IN OTHER JOURNALS . . . 138

The Medical Directory of Australia

New and updated data on doctors, healthcare professionals and organisations listed in four distinct sections: Alphabetical Directory, Referral Guide, Hospitals and Other Facilities, Associations and Organisations.

Order Now For Only \$185

AMA Members receive 10% discount!

To order or for more information contact the Book Sales Co-ordinator at AMPCo
Jason Garrett: Telephone (02) 9562 6666 • Email sales@ampco.com.au

