

EDITORIALS

- 436 Obstetricians and midwives *modus vivendi* for current times
Edward W Weaver, Kenneth F Clark, Barbara A Vernon
- 437 A picture of Australia's children
George C Patton, Sharon R Goldfeld, Indrani Pieris-Caldwell,
Meredith Bryant, Graham V Vimpani
- 439 Friedreich ataxia: from genes to therapies?
Martin B Delatycki, Panos A Ioannou, Andrew J Churchyard
- 440 Gene therapy: great expectations?
Adrian J Thrasher
- 441 Oversight and monitoring of clinical research with
gene therapy in Australia
Ronald J A Trent

CONFERENCE REPORT

- 444 24/7 Health. Second annual Sleep Loss Symposium:
working and sleeping around the clock
Naomi L Rogers, Ronald R Grunstein

RESEARCH

- 447 Estimating Australia's abortion rates 1985–2003
Annabelle Chan, Leonie C Sage
- 453 The Australian Cancer Anaemia Survey:
a snapshot of anaemia in adult patients with cancer
Tara Seshadri, H Miles Prince, David R Bell, Paul B Coughlin,
Philip P B James, Gary E Richardson, Boris Chern, Peter Briggs,
John Norman, Ian N Olver, Chris Karapetis, John Stewart,
for the Australia Cancer Anaemia Study (ACAS) Group
- 458 Treatment of an infant with X-linked severe combined
immunodeficiency (SCID-X1) by gene therapy in Australia
Samantha L Ginn, Julie A Curtin, Belinda Kramer, Christine M Smyth,
Melanie Wong, Alyson Kakakios, Geoffrey B McCowage,
Debbie Watson, Stephen I Alexander, Margot Latham,
Sharon C Cunningham, Maolin Zheng, Linda Hobson,
Peter B Rowe, Alain Fischer, Marina Cavazzana-Calvo,
Salima Hacein-Bey-Abina, Ian E Alexander

POSITION STATEMENT

- 464 The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and
Allergy position statement: summary of allergy prevention
in children
Susan L Prescott, Mimi LK Tang

THE RESEARCH ENTERPRISE

- 468 Improving the governance of health research
Michael K Walsh, John J McNeil, Kerry J Breen

FOR DEBATE

- 472 Communicating prostate cancer risk: what should
we be telling our patients?
Peter D Baade, Suzanne K Steginga, Carole B Pinnock,
Joanne F Aitken

CLINICAL UPDATE

- 476 Venous thromboembolism: diagnosis and management
of deep venous thrombosis
Wai Khoon Ho, Graeme J Hankey, Cindy H Lee, John W Eikelboom

NOTABLE CASES

- 482 Life-threatening allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis
in a well child with cystic fibrosis
Emma Skowronski, Dominic A Fitzgerald

MJA PRACTICE ESSENTIALS – PAEDIATRICS

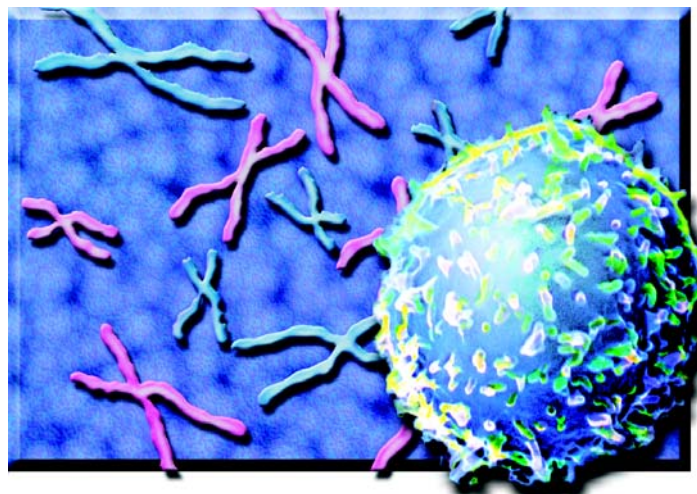
- 484 9. Common causes of sleep disruption and daytime
sleepiness: childhood sleep disorders II
Helen S Heussler

LETTERS

(contents overleaf)

MJA SUPPLEMENT

- S1-S16 National data elements for the clinical management
of acute coronary syndromes



THE MEDICAL TIME BOMB

The 2004 meeting of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists featured a session, prompted by the dwindling numbers of male obstetricians, called "Find the man".

A month later, a kerfuffle erupted in Britain when *The Independent* ran the story, "The Medical time bomb: too many women doctors", based on an interview with Professor Carol Black, President of the Royal College of Physicians. She raised concerns about risks to the medical profession's power and influence because "too many female doctors were scaling its ranks... and action was needed to correct [a future] imbalance of the sexes". Black also aired problems flowing from the skewed distribution of women in subspecialties and their reduced status and involvement in professional bodies, and stated that women find it impossible "to do all the things we expect a doctor to do to be at the top of the profession".


Not unexpectedly, feathers were ruffled. *The Lancet* repudiated Black's call to correct the sex imbalance of doctors, labelling it "highly inappropriate". In response, it suggested increasing the numbers of graduates, both men and women, and rectifying the reasons for women's lesser professional status and involvement.

What are we to make of all this?

The downstream effects of feminisation of the medical workforce are only one aspect of the medical time bomb. Ticking away are the tensions between professional and personal lives, the attitudes of modern graduates to medicine, the widening workforce gaps with inadequate doctor numbers and shorter working hours, and the failure to meet the differing needs of the sexes to ensure satisfying clinical careers.

To defuse the medical time bomb, we sorely need more leaders like Carol Black to give voice to tomorrow's problems, today.

Martin B Van Der Weyden



LETTERS

- Prevalence of colonisation with vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE) among haemodialysis outpatients in Victoria: implications for screening**
492 Laurelle J Burrell, Elizabeth A Grabsch, Alexander A Padiglione, M Lindsay Grayson
- Effectiveness and side effects of thiazolidinediones for type 2 diabetes**
492 Adam P Morton, H David McIntyre
494 Nirusha Arnold, Mark McLean, David R Chipps, N Wah Cheung
- Profound hypocalcaemia after zoledronic acid treatment**
494 Huong V Nguyen, Katherine B Ingram, Jonathan Beilin
- Impact of smoking, diabetes and hypertension on survival in the elderly: the Dubbo Study**
495 Peter A Frith
495 Leon A Simons, Judith Simons
- Working with registrars: a registrar's perspective**
496 Bernard M Bourke

BOOK REVIEW

- 452 **Women's health in general practice** reviewed by Marie V Pirotta

OBITUARY

- 463 **Bruce Heath Gutteridge** by Donald H Gutteridge

CORRECTION

- 471 **MJA Practice Essentials – Paediatrics “Investigation and treatment of upper-airway obstruction: childhood sleep disorders I”**
(*Med J Aust* 2005; 182: 419-423).

434 IN THIS ISSUE

491 IN OTHER JOURNALS

Cover image: Illustration reprinted with permission from *The illustrated history of medicine*, by Jean-Charles Sournia. Published by Harold Stark. (See pages 440, 441 and 458)