

## EDITORIALS

- 595 Emergency department frequent flyers: unnecessary load or a lifeline?  
Gordian WO Fulde, Martin Duffy
- 596 Killing the messenger: should scientific journals be responsible for policing scientific fraud?  
Ana Marušić, Matko Marušić
- 597 The Greater Metropolitan Clinical Taskforce: an Australian model for clinician governance  
Graeme J Stewart, John M Dwyer, Kerry J Goulston
- 599 Hospital in the home: a concept under question  
Gideon A Caplan
- 600 Should clinical software be regulated?  
Enrico W Coiera, Johanna I Westbrook

## RESEARCH

- 602 The effect of multidisciplinary case management on selected outcomes for frequent attenders at an emergency department  
Georgina Ann Phillips, David S Brophy, Tracey J Weiland, Antony J Chenhall, Andrew W Dent
- 607 Epilepsy in Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Far North Queensland  
John Archer, Ruth Bunby
- 611 Postpartum anti-D: can we safely reduce the dose?  
Bradley M Augustson, Elizabeth A Fong, Dianne E Grey, Janine I Davies, Wendy N Erber
- 614 Ultrasonography in diagnosing colorectal cancers in patients presenting with abdominal distension  
Shyr-Chyr Chen, Zui-Shen Yen, Hsiu-Po Wang, Chien-Chang Lee, Chiung-Yuan Hsu, Wen-Jone Chen, Chien-Yao Hsu, Hong-Shiee Lai, Fang-Yue Lin, Wei-Jao Chen
- 617 Iodine status in pregnant women and their newborns: are our babies at risk of iodine deficiency?  
Cheryl A Travers, Kamala Guttikonda, Carol A Norton, Peter R Lewis, Lyndall J Mollart, Veronica Wiley, Bridget Wilcken, Creswell J Eastman, Steven C Boyages

## RESEARCH ENTERPRISE

- 621 Predictors of publication: characteristics of submitted manuscripts associated with acceptance at major biomedical journals  
Kirby P Lee, Elizabeth A Boyd, Jayna M Holroyd-Leduc, Peter Bacchetti, Lisa A Bero

## CLINICAL UPDATE

- 627 Challenges in the diagnosis of Marfan syndrome  
Kim M Summers, Jennifer A West, Madelyn M Peterson, Denis Stark, James J McGill, Malcolm J West

## FOR DEBATE

- 632 What can we learn from the Hwang and Sudbø affairs?  
Paul Gerber

## VIEWPOINT

- 638 The repeating history of objections to the fortification of bread and alcohol: from iron filings to folic acid  
Max Kamien

## DIAGNOSTIC DILEMMA

- 641 Slowly progressive cranial nerve palsies  
Giles C Warner, Mitesh Gandhi, Benedict Panizza

- 645 **LETTERS**  
(contents overleaf)



### QUESTIONING MEDICAL EDUCATION

Medical education in Australia is now a matter of public concern as the depth of knowledge of medical graduates in basic sciences is questioned. Recently, *The Weekend Australian*, in their story "Doctors fail basic anatomy", reported that "Senior doctors claim teaching hours for anatomy have been slashed by 80 per cent in some medical schools to make way for 'touchy-feely' subjects such as 'cultural sensitivity', communication and ethics. The time devoted to other basic sciences — including biochemistry, physiology and pathology — has also been reduced." An accompanying editorial opined that "Medical schools are only the latest institutions to fall victim to postmodern academic fashions that ignore the basics in favour of the trendy and the politically correct." A subsequent report highlighted the concerns of Australasian clinical colleges about the downturn of basic medical sciences.

Despite this criticism and concern, deans of medicine were defiant, and the Australian Medical Council (which accredits our medical schools) remained strangely silent. The Chairman of the Committee of Deans of Australian Medical Schools summarily dismissed the criticism as a "clash of cultures" within the profession and noted "I have never seen any evidence ... in any of our disciplines that would show we are deficient."

And this is the problem. There is no public evidence. There is no national assessment of knowledge in basic sciences or in any other medical domain; assessment is internal. There is no national comprehensive outline of course content; this is left to institutional judgements. Last year, when the "clash of cultures" emerged, the former Minister for Education established a steering committee to gather the evidence. Whether it will have the impact of the 1988 Doherty Report on medical education remains to be seen. The last thing we need is another talkfest producing a report for political archives and inaction.



Martin B Van Der Weyden

### LETTERS

- Substance misuse in patients with acute mental illness**  
645 Cherrie Ann Galletly, Darryl P Watson
- A call for help. Australia needs a standard emergency phone number in all hospitals**  
645 Gerald F Williams
- "Positive" family planning: another personal viewpoint**  
645 Jane M Andrews
- Adverse drug events: counting is not enough, action is needed**  
646 Graeme C Miller, Helena C Britt, Lisa Valenti, Stephanie Knox
- Health services research in Hungary**  
646 Imre Boncz, Andor Sebestyén
- The Research Quality Framework**  
647 E Malcolm Symonds
- High-cost users of hospital beds in Western Australia**  
647 Chris Holmwood

### CORRECTION

- 616 **The association between hospital overcrowding and mortality among patients admitted via Western Australian emergency departments**  
(*Med J Aust* 2006; 184: 208-212)

### BOOK REVIEWS

- 613 **Primary care ophthalmology. 2nd ed.**  
*reviewed by Malcolm J Burvill*
- 631 **Paediatric trauma manual**  
*reviewed by Andrew JA Holland*

### OBITUARY

- 635 **Edwin Sinclair Young** *by Paul Gerber*

### SNAPSHOT

- 643 **Lower-back pain, intervertebral-disc calcification and scleral pigmentation**  
Aman Sharma, Shefali K Sharma, Ajay Wanchu, Manish Kumar, Surjit Singh, Pradeep Bambery

### 594 IN THIS ISSUE

### 644 IN OTHER JOURNALS