

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIALS/COMMENTARIES

Two editorials discuss the welcome change to single-dose Levonelle® for emergency contraception, and the general issue of off-licence prescribing.

ABORTION SERVICES

Decision making and referral prior to abortion: a qualitative study of women's experiences (p. 51) and **Peri-abortion contraception: a qualitative study of users' experiences (p. 55)**

These two related papers look at the whole spectrum of abortion service provision in three inner London boroughs, from the perspective of the client. The authors point out failings in the system and suggest possible improvements.

COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Coil or intrauterine device? Patient preferences for contraceptive terminology (p. 46) and the accompanying commentary, **What we say and how we say it... (p. 11)**, look at the issues of communication between health professionals and clients.

COUSIN MARRIAGE

In closely-knit communities, marriages between cousins are not uncommon, despite recognition of an increased risk of genetic conditions. In **Cousin marriage and premarital carrier matching in a Bedouin community in Israel: attitudes, service development and educational intervention (p. 49)** the authors have interviewed members of such a community and present insights into their attitudes to these issues, and to genetic testing.

LABORATORY TECHNIQUES

It is often difficult to keep up with rapidly changing laboratory techniques and specimen collection. An overview article, **Laboratory diagnosis of common genital viral infections (p. 24)**, presents up-to-date information.

HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

The world of **hormone replacement therapy (p. 21)** has also recently undergone many upsets and changes, and we hope many will find the review of this issue timely and useful.

CLINICAL EFFECTIVENESS UNIT

The CEU has provided a product review of Evra®, the new contraceptive patch, as well as a Guidance document on IUDs, and another example from their enquiry service.

EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE

How should a review article be written? In **Reviewing the literature: adopting a systematic approach (p. 13)** two of the Journal's statistical advisors present a detailed yet pragmatic approach, balancing the need for scientific rigour with practical common sense and clinical utility. This amounts to a guideline for future review articles in this Journal, which, it is hoped, will be found useful by prospective authors.

This theme is continued in the final article in the evidence-based medicine series: **Evidence-based reproductive health care: getting evidence into practice (p. 17)**. This looks at the use of reviews, guidelines and other methods of achieving desirable changes in medical practice.

FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

An innovation in this issue is **Clinical Conundrums (p. 62)**, which we hope will become a regular feature. We hope this article will stimulate discussion and debate. Let us know what you think of the idea, and your thoughts on this month's case. Another new column is **From Our Consumer Correspondent (p. 59)**, written by Susan Quilliam, an experienced agony aunt. Susan reviews the recent HRT media scare from the client's perspective, with some fascinating insights.

Faces behind the *Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care*



Paula Baraitser, MB BS, MFFP (*Associate Editor*)

Paula Baraitser has been a SCMO in Southwark Primary Care Trust, South London for the last 5 years where she has been responsible for research. Paula is currently a Clinical Champion for Lambeth and Southwark Sexual Health Modernisation Initiative which aims to re-think sexual health service development in an area with some of the highest rates of sexually transmitted infection, teenage pregnancy and abortion in the UK. Paula is going to pursue her interests in service development and evaluation by training in public health medicine.

Jo Bibby, MB ChB, MRCOG (*Associate Editor*)

Jo is a Specialist Registrar Retainer in obstetrics and gynaecology. Her fields of special interest are sexual health and reproductive health care. Jo is currently in the final stages of completing her MFFP.



Susan Quilliam, BA (*Consumer Correspondent*)

After graduating in Psychology and English at Liverpool University, Susan worked as a teacher and lecturer before training in counselling. She then founded the Brussels Co-counselling community, and also worked in Britain and Belgium as a counsellor trainer and teacher trainer. Susan currently works as a writer, broadcaster and agony aunt; she has six columns in British and American magazines and websites, and is agony aunt for ITV's Teletext service. She is the author of 18 books on relationships and sexuality published in 23 countries and 19 languages, including books written in conjunction with Relate and The Samaritans. Susan is a member of the British Association of Sexual and Relationship Therapists, the Society of Authors and the Guild of Health Writers.

Barbara Heyda, BSc, PgDip Librarianship (*Editorial Project Manager*)

Barbara has a BSc (Hons) degree in physiology and biochemistry and a postgraduate diploma in librarianship. She has more than 20 years' experience as a medical information scientist in the drug industry, working for various companies including Schering, Upjohn and Wyeth. Barbara has also worked for a medical conference database company, analysing abstracts from worldwide conferences.

