

DEAR SIRs

The issues to which Drs Kerwin and Lewis draw attention were fully discussed in correspondence in the *Journal*, last January; no additional matter of substance has been raised about them since then.

Although your correspondents make the statement that the editorial standards of the *Journal* were compromised by the publication of Supplement No. 3, they do not provide any supporting evidence for this view.

The allegation that "The same symposium was also published as a supplement by another journal (Silverstone, 1989)" is entirely untrue, as can readily be confirmed. Nor is it correct that Altamura *et al* (1988), which appeared in the supplement, "merely pooled data from two previously published clinical trials". The purpose of that paper was to provide a scientific discussion of problems relating to dosage schedules, using the trials in question as illustrations; that material had not appeared previously, and was a valid publication in itself.

In spite of their extensive discussion of 'redundant' publication, Drs Kerwin and Lewis give no example relevant to this Supplement, except for Wernicke *et al* (1989). That clearly appeared *later*, and is not a matter for which this *Journal* has any responsibility; any problem about it should be discussed with the appropriate editor. This *Journal* has not and will not condone practices such as dual publication, either in supplements or any other form.

The reference to "drug company supplements" is in any case misleading. In the case of Supplement No. 3, 45 pages of text were unrelated to any particular compound; the rest consisted of objective scientific information about fluoxetine, which is of important concern to the international professional community. No pharmaceutical company had any influence over the selection of papers, from a large number given at the relevant meeting, and their editing was entirely under the control of the *Journal*.

"Receiving money" is a phrase calculated to arouse distaste, by implying that something discreditable has been done. As I have pointed out in a previous letter (*Journal*, July 1989, 155, 126) the surplus from publications is an increasingly important contribution to College income; without it, the College's activities would have to be seriously curtailed. We "receive money" from journal subscriptions, sale of books and supplements, advertisements, inserts, sale of reprints, and copyright or translation rights; Supplement No. 3 does not represent any deviation of principle from what has been done for many years in that way and which had not aroused criticism.

Any policy may be "potentially damaging" if carried out irresponsibly, inefficiently, or without observing accepted standards; no such circumstances have occurred in the case of our *Journal*, and I do not intend that they should occur in the future. Publi-

cation of supplements has followed the policy agreed by Council, and I have been heartened by the many expressions of support for them that I have received from colleagues.

HUGH FREEMAN

Editor

British Journal of Psychiatry

Attendance of health authority officers at Consultants' Advisory Appointments Committees

DEAR SIRs

It is disappointing that in recent months the College has twice reiterated its apparently strong view that managers should not be members of Consultant Advisory Appointment Committees (*Psychiatric Bulletin*, February 1989, 13, 104 and Comments of the Royal College of Psychiatrists on the NHS White Paper 'Working for Patients' (*Psychiatric Bulletin*, July 1989, 13, 385-389). Can at least one member of the College strongly disagree with this opinion for a number of reasons?

I am in little doubt that the local Mental Health Unit Manager is likely to have a much better idea of the nature of the post which is being appointed to than a number of the non local consultants on the Appointments Committee. I would go further and suggest that the presence of senior nurse, or at least a senior representative of the clinical non medical staff, would also be a valuable member of Consultant Appointments Committee as an involved colleague who will know the needs of the service.

If we had such a system, a pay-off would be that we should expect medical representation on senior management, nursing, psychology, etc. appointment committees. Frequently we are quite reasonably excluded from such appointment committees on a tit for tat basis.

Finally, to suggest, as the College's comments on 'Working for Patients' does, that the presence of a manager can lead to "serious distortion of the selection process" throws a very poor light on those psychiatrists present who apparently cannot stand up to the views of a forceful manager.

The whole tenor of these statements is defensive, even paranoid, and wholly out of tune with those parts of the College which are trying to move towards good multidisciplinary working relationships.

SAM BAXTER

*Charing Cross Hospital
London W6 8RF*

In the wake of Hillsborough

DEAR SIRs

In the wake of the Hillsborough tragedy, in which 95 Liverpool football fans perished, the experience