

The 'fly in the ointment' has been the apparent reluctance of the Home Office to sanction expeditious return of a patient to prison following hospital treatment or when it has become clear that treatment is ineffective. I have experience of such transactions taking many months to negotiate during which time other patients are deprived of the opportunity of treatment.

This is the situation which obtained under Section 72 (MHA, 1959) at a general psychiatric hospital. If the matter has now changed I am sure that there are many psychiatrists who will be most happy to hear of it.

Moorhaven Hospital
Ivybridge, S. Devon

ALAN POOLE

Facilities at 17 Belgrave Square

DEAR SIR

Dr Snaith raises some interesting points about the facilities available to members when they visit the College (*Bulletin*, February 1984, 8, 28-9).

I should like to take this opportunity to advertise the fact that there is a pleasant sitting room here, for the use of members, situated immediately to the left after you come in through the front door. It seems that Dr Snaith did not know about this, although it has been mentioned in the *Bulletin*, and it may be that others are also unaware of it.

I will look into the other deficiencies that Dr Snaith highlights and see to what extent they can be rectified.

R. G. PRIEST
Registrar

17 Belgrave Square
London SW1

More papers on administrative aspects of psychiatry

DEAR SIR

Part of a psychiatrist's duties are clearly administrative, yet there seems to be a great shortage of papers on the administrative aspects of psychiatry, both in the *Journal* and the *Bulletin*. For example, someone could use systems theory to look at the operational functioning and patterns of communication in various institutions.

Midland Nerve Hospital
Edgbaston, Birmingham

R. M. BIRKETT

The College and the British Psychological Society

DEAR SIR

This is as good a time as any to remind psychiatrist and psychologist colleagues of the existence of this Joint Standing Committee which was set up in 1977 to consider, on behalf of the parent bodies, matters of concern to both. The Committee meets three times annually, under a Chairman elected in turn from the psychiatrist and psychologist members. The current membership is as follows: *Chairman*: Dr F. M. McPherson (BPS); *Vice-Chairman*: Dr J. L. T. Birley; *College Members*: Professor T. Arie, Dr J. Pedder, Dr W. Lumsden-Walker, Dr M. MacCulloch and Dr K. Day; *BPS Members*: Mr D. A. Black, Mr M. K. Cornwall, Dr F. N. Watts, and Mr R. P. Webster. The meetings are also attended by Dr A. Sippert (Principal Medical Officer, DHSS), Dr E. Miller (Consultant Adviser in Clinical Psychology, DHSS) and Dr C. V. Newman (Scientific and Professional Adviser, BPS).

Among the topics which the Committee has considered recently have been the Statutory Registration both of psychotherapists and of psychologists, the Mental Health (Amendment) Act and the Mental Health Commission, the teaching of psychology to trainees in psychiatry, and the obtaining of experience of educational psychology for trainees in child psychiatry. In addition, joint conferences are being planned by the Committee for 1984, one between the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Section and the Division of Child and Educational Psychology, with participation also by the Division of Clinical Psychology, and the other a larger meeting between the College and the BPS which may concentrate on general educational issues, the inter-relationship of the professions, and the clinical priorities of NHS clinical psychology.

Most topics are brought to the Committee by the relevant sub-system of the parent bodies to which it reports back. Inevitably, therefore, the Committee is not often very visible to the individual members of the College or the BPS. However, the Committee would welcome suggestions from members of topics of relevance to both professions which could profitably be considered by the Committee. Any such suggestions should be sent to the Administrative Secretary of the Joint Standing Committee at the College address.

FRANK M. MCPHERSON

Royal Dundee Liff Hospital
Dundee

Miss Natalie Cobbing

A Memorial Service has been arranged and will take place on Thursday, 29 March, 1984 at 12 noon at St. Paul's Church, Wilton Place, London S.W.1.