



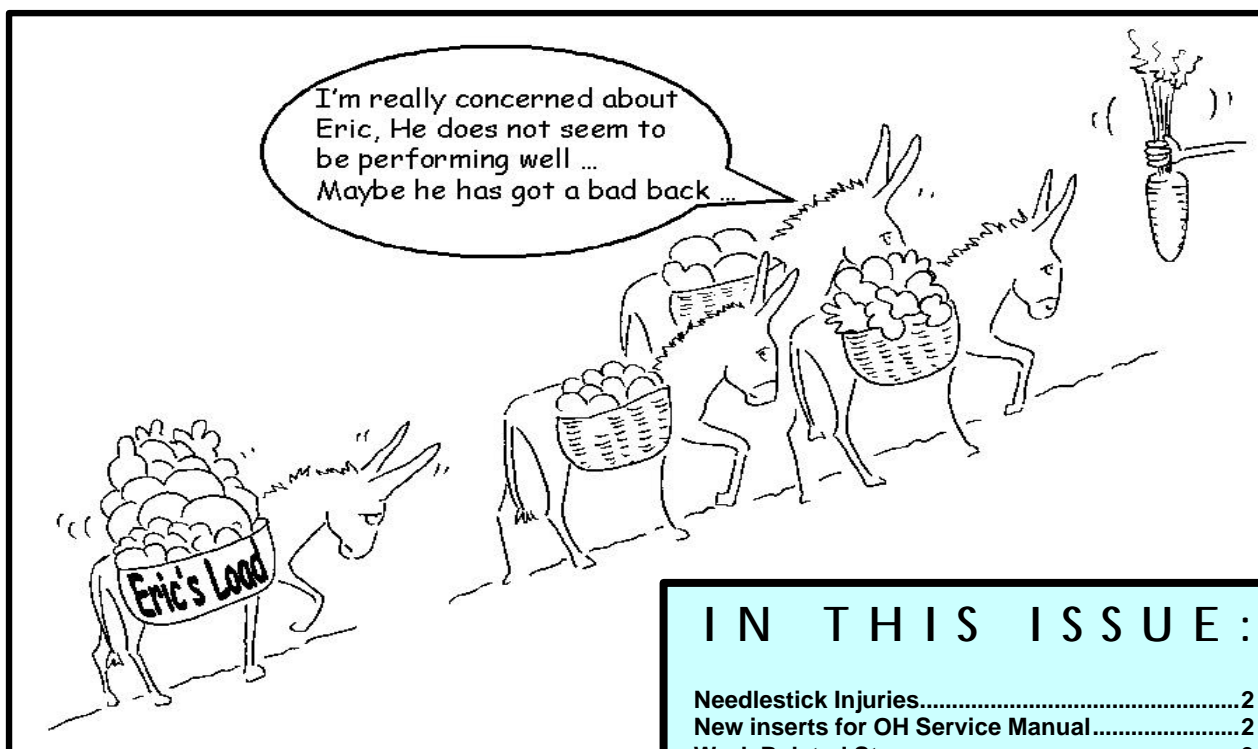
# YOU MATTER!

The Newsletter  
keeping you informed  
of what's going on in  
Occupational Health

Issue No. 10 ~ February 2002

## Welcome to the first edition of 'You Matter' in 2002

The OH Team wish you a happy New Year. We will continue visiting as many Practices as possible across South and West Devon and Cornwall, so if we haven't met you yet, we look forward to doing so this coming year.



IN THIS ISSUE :	
Needlestick Injuries.....	2
New inserts for OH Service Manual.....	2
Work Related Stress .....	3
The Cost of Sick Leave.....	4
OH Conference 2001 Review.....	5
Contact Details.....	5

**Date for your Diary!**  
 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Occupational Health Conference  
**Thursday 28th November 2002**  
 The theme will focus on solutions rather than problems!  
**Watch this Space!**



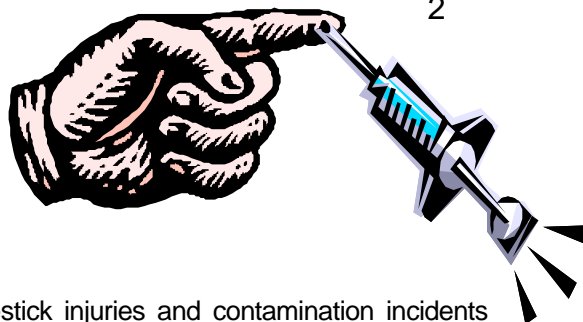
**CONGRATULATIONS**

Many thanks to all those who entered the OH Conference Competition to find a new name for the Occupational Health Service.  
 We had so many interesting entries that we decided to put them all in a hat and the lucky winner of the bubbly was

**Andrea Smyth**  
 Practice Manager, Adelaide Surgery, Plymouth



# Exposure to blood-borne viruses



## Needlestick Injuries and Contamination Incidents

We have at last managed to formulate some guidance on needlestick injuries and contamination incidents (NI/CI) aimed specifically at Primary Care staff based in GP Practices.

This guidance is designed to be pragmatic and readable but ultimately detailed enough to keep you safe in your clinical practice.

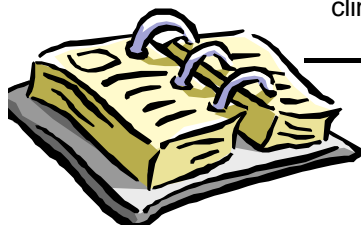
The guidance will shortly be made available to all Practices as part of the latest 'document release' (see later) for the Occupational Health and Safety Manual (big white lever arch thing – hopefully located in a central position and well-thumbed rather than gathering dust on a remote shelf!!!)

### Please take time to read the guidance if:

- You are in regular clinical contact with patients
- You are involved in any cleaning activities of clinical areas within the Practice
- You are managerially responsible for the staff described above

### Accompanying the guidance will be:

- Some handy pocket-sized cards which bear the most important elements of post needlestick injury advice. We advise that all clinical staff are encouraged to keep a card with them at all times when they are working.
- A3 sized posters with a summary of the advice contained in the guidance – designed to be displayed in clinical areas of the Practice.



### Document Release – for the Occupational Health and Safety Policies Manual

We will shortly be releasing further advice and guidance, which we would ask to be filed in your Practice Occupational Health & Safety Manual. This will include:

- ❑ Specific guidance relating to: Exposure to blood-borne viruses – needlestick and contamination incidents in Primary Care staff (see above)
- ❑ Health & Executive advice leaflet 'RIDDOR explained' (see Newsletter April/May 2000 for more information)
- ❑ Health and Safety Executive advice leaflet 'Latex and you'
- ❑ An introduction to 'Seeing the Occupational Physician' – designed to give further information to individuals who self-refer or are referred to see the Occupational Physician
- ❑ Information regarding a change in the procedure for referral to the Occupational Physician (**Cornwall only**)
- ❑ Some leaflets introducing and explaining the OH Service – designed to be made freely available, initially to all existing staff and thereafter to all new staff

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have queries regarding any of the above (contact numbers/addresses on the back page).

We hope that the OH&S Manual is meeting your needs – as usual, let us know if there is anything particular that you would like to see included. Thank you.

## Supplies of these will be FREE

If you would like any advice regarding NI/CIs, either before or after you have received the Guidance, please do not hesitate to contact the OH Team (numbers/addresses on the back page)

### Please don't forget:

Needlestick injuries are not an inevitable or acceptable part of clinical work but they are mistakes and they could happen to any of us.

If you (or your staff) have the misfortune of suffering a needlestick injury then being prepared will improve both the experience and the outcome of what can be a highly stressful event.



## WRITING MEANINGLESS DRIVEL AND CHUCKLING

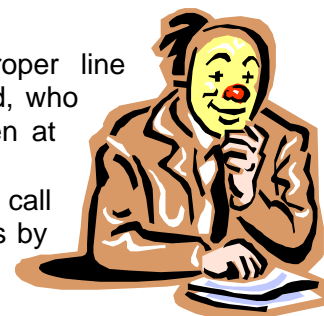
### Important signs of work related stress

In this article we describe two important signs of work related stress, which may, in extreme cases, go together.

**Writing drivel** can be seen as part of what psychiatrists call 'a manic defence mechanism'. Victims almost always suffer performance problems such as failing to complete PMA reports and to read Department of Health Circulars. Drivel may be found by chance when looking for notes or can take the form of dictated letters with grandiose destination 'Mr Milburn' or 'Mr Blair'.

**Chuckling** has fortunately been removed from secondary care by proper line management. It still however, can occur in Primary Care. Those affected, who have no right to be happy, can be observed chuckling to themselves when at work.

If you feel that anyone in your surgery is affected please do not hesitate to call us. Just to highlight the problem here is the meaningless drivel sent to us by one Devon practice:



### TO: HM INSPECTOR OF TAXES - PRESENTS

I am writing to declare gifts, which I have received whilst plying my trade as a GP this year. I have, as you will see, also set out my expenses. It would be most helpful if you could make all GPs and Practice staff do the same as it would greatly aid the sales of my recently invested 'GIFT CODING AND ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE PACKAGE'.

As you will see, I have also set out associated expenses.

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENSES</u>	
<b>FOODSTUFFS</b>		Weight Watchers £2.40 /week x 3	£7.20
Chocolate Biscuits (various)	4 boxes	Dental Treatment (+ certificate to say wholly due to Home-made Toffee)	£160.45
Home-made Toffee	2 bags	Chiropractic Treatment (after attempt to use Sigmoidoscope on self)	£380.00
Pasties	2	Imodium (6 Boxes)	£15.30
Preserves: Strawberry	3	Paracetamol (16 Boxes)	£14.10
Plum	1	Mileage from above 2,000 miles*	
Provenance Unknown	6	*Please note due to lack of confidentiality Chiropractic treatment carried out in Glasgow	
Foxes Glacier Mints	17		
Windfall Apples	1 Bag		
Cheesy Wotsits	12		
Fruit and Fibre Bars	12		
<b>ALCOHOL</b>			
Chateau No Hangover	8 Bottles		
Chateau Big Hangover	3 Bottles		
Whisky	3 Bottles		
Gin	1 Bottle		
Home Made Alcohol	6 Bottles		
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			
Rigid Sigmoidoscope (circa 1950) given by (1) retired consultant surgeon.			
Newspaper cuttings (mostly from Daily Telegraph) (93)			
Books : Better Diagnostic Skills for Doctors (1)			
Better Bedside Manners for Doctors (1)			
Photocopies of Website Information (19)			
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED VALUE</b>	<b>£193.78</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£890.43</b>

Thus I have a net loss for the year of £607.65 all incurred as part of my work



and on a more serious note.....

## The Costs of Sick Leave



Be warned! It is almost inevitable that absence on sick leave will have a cost either to the individual GP or the partnership. There is certainly no guarantee that the Health Authority will cover such costs.

While the practice will continue to receive all GMS or PMS income, the additional payments that can be claimed from the Health Authority to cover the costs of locums are subject to certain conditions. The arrangements for eligibility are complex in respect of age, length of service and number of patients. Practitioners working in partnerships will be expected to stand in for each other as far as possible, unless patient numbers exceed a minimum of 2,700 per full-time equivalent.

The current BMA suggested rates for locums means that the likely cost for a week's absence for a typical full-time GP could be between £800 and £1,000.

It is therefore highly recommended that all GPs should maintain and review their sickness insurance on a regular basis to cover against loss of earnings, which should be supplemented with ill health retirement and death in service benefits. They should also take out either a practice or personal locum insurance plan to protect against short-term absence.

### Typical Questions and Answers

<p><b>Q.</b></p>	<p>Are there any kinds of sickness insurance that are tax deductible?</p>	<p><b>A.</b></p>	<p>The premiums of policies to meet the specific costs of locums are tax relievable, and to obtain cover of up to £1,000 per week would cost approximately £575 per annum, (i.e. a net cost of £345 to a GP paying tax at the highest rate). Similarly, the costs of professional expenses cover in respect of both locums and general business running expenses can be offset against tax.</p> <p>No tax relief is available for the costs of income protection policies.</p>
<p><b>Q.</b></p>	<p>Will I be taxed on income from these policies?</p>	<p><b>A.</b></p>	<p>Where any such insurance policies are allowed for tax, then it follows that any benefit received is taxable income. However, as they are intended to refund directly the costs incurred the net effect is nil.</p> <p>The compensation payments received under a health insurance policy for loss of income are, where certain conditions are met, fully exempt from tax.</p>
<p><b>Q.</b></p>	<p>Can the costs of practice staff sickness insurance be claimed against tax?</p>	<p><b>A.</b></p>	<p>All premiums on such policies are allowable against tax, and the proceeds taxable receipts. However, if the policy is designed to pay employees directly for loss of income during sickness, then a taxable benefit arises on the employee.</p>

If you have a query specific to the above article please contact John Stokes of Darnells on [john.stokes@darnells.co.uk](mailto:john.stokes@darnells.co.uk) or 01626 863443



## 'In Sickness and in Health!'

This 2nd Annual Conference was held in November 2001 with over 100 delegates attending. The theme of the conference was the use and abuse of power and exploring its influence within working life.

Pete Goss, Cornish sailor extraordinaire 'dared us to dream' leaving many feeling that the challenges of the ocean were not dissimilar in some ways to the challenges of General Practice!



Guest Speaker Pete Goss and Dr Charlie

The conference also gave delegates the opportunity to meet and listen to other local and national speakers and to network with colleagues. The general feedback we had was very positive.






We would like to thank Pfizer once again for their generous sponsorship and the LMC staff for all their administrative support.



Morning Panel Session

Dr Kit Harling, Dr David Longdon, Dr Andy Stewart and Dr Ben Charnaud

## Contact Details

	<b>0117 923 2381</b> any Wednesday from 9:00am – 5:00pm
	You can fax us at any time on: <b>0117 923 2382</b> or <b>01530 224 762</b>
	You can email us any time at: <b>sue@abbottburke.co.uk</b> <b>lesley@abbottburke.co.uk</b> or <b>georgina@abbottburke.co.uk</b>
	Sue Burke & Lesley Abbott postal address: <b>33 Logan Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8DS</b>
	<b>Georgina Wingfield can be contacted via Occupational Health, Crusader House, Newham Road, Truro, TR1 2DP Telephone No: 01872 274374 - Fax No: 01872 274378</b>

