Genital Chlamydia trachomatis infection in women in a Nigerian hospital

I report the read of Amin and colleagues' on the outcome of opportunistic screening for Chlamydia trachomatis in women seen in the antenatal and gynaecology clinics in north east Nigeria with intentions. The prevalence of 9% was comparable with our study population reported from the north east of England. However, the authors, in screening only the cervical site, would have failed to pick up those women in whom urethral sites are the only site of infection.1)

Of concern is the dearth of data on the analogous male partners of those with their condition(s): 18% of the study sample were in a polygamous marriage, untreated and untreated individuals will remain a reservoir of infections.

The findings of the authors in this supposedly low risk population, in tandem with the reported increase in HIV infection from seroepidemiological studies in antenatal clinics in Maiduguri, north east Nigeria1 should serve as a catalyst in the development of effective sexual health services, led by obstetricians and gynaecologists offering women routine opportunistic screening for sexually transmitted infections, encouraging attendance and treatment of their male partner(s), and offering family planning and contraception.

These measures will ultimately enhance the sexual health of the catchment population with a concomitant reduction in the sequel of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Guide to Living with HIV Infection. By J G BARTLETT & A K FINKREINER.


To echo the sentiments of Joseph Maier, the author of the prologue to this guide, I am living with HIV, not an HIV sufferer or an HIV victim. It is clear that the authors appreciated the importance of these feelings and this is the main reason why I found what could have been just another dry reference book, such a good read.

Clear, concise explanations and guidance encouraged me to read the more technical sections on infections and treatments, subjects which many of us with HIV find difficult to absorb because of offputting medical jargon and our inherent concerns to information about what could happen to us. As the guide was written from a US perspective, many of the legal and practical aspects of HIV it discussed are not strictly applicable to the UK, although there are similarities in themes and frameworks between the two countries. The information on transmission and pregnancy of women with HIV has already fairly well rehearsed material, although it would be useful for the newcomer to HIV.

The use of "the voices" of people with HIV to introduce subjects and illustrate alternative attitudes and approaches to various issues helped to sustain my interest and gave credence to the guidance which was offered. I felt the authors had actually listened to the thoughts and feelings of those who are experiencing the devastating effects of HIV, and that they had given serious consideration to practical and emotional strategies for dealing with these effects, rather than merely trotting out platitudes. They also highlighted that living with HIV is not only possible, but that life can continue to have meaning and be fulfilling for those infected and for their friends and families.

The sections which deal with the emotions, relationships, and dying were the most interesting, relevant, and moving for me. The guide covered the most typical range of emotional reactions experienced by those of us dealing with HIV, including anger, fear, depression, hope, and guilt. It helped me to find my way which was accepting, not dismissive or patronising. It also highlighted that as many people react to HIV in different ways, so they cope in different ways and there is no right approach. The powerful and moving chapter on interpersonal relationships included ideas on how to deal with some of the common problems experienced by people with HIV and by carers.

Living with HIV means being "faced with that ultimate fear [death] all the time" (p98) and the authors tackled this most difficult subject in a calm, gentle and encouraging way. The chapter on dying helped me to think about my own death and how I will face it. The most powerful message for me in the guide is that I can face death because "The person who has lived is the same as the person who will die. If you know yourself at all, you know how you will die" (p292). The question is, will I have time to know myself?

JANE JUMA


In the preface of this book, the author states his intention to provide up to date medical information on topics of everyday concern for women and a companion book for practice nurses. The book covers an enormous variety of subjects from eating disorders to breast cancer and the detail included in some sections is remarkable. However, the relevance of including the eight anatomical variations of the hymen is questionable. The instructions on how a woman may examine her own cervix with the aid of a mirror, torch, KY jelly, and speculum bought from a medical shop! Unfortunately, this publication is plagued by typographical, grammatical, and factual errors. Sections which include "culminating", the retractile citrines, and the statement that "genital heat be caught from toilet seats", result in the book losing some credibility. In addition, some of the information is

This book is aimed at general practitioners and primary healthcare team members who are involved in family planning services, and who wish to organise a high quality, accessible service for all their patients. It is not designed to give detailed information about the different contraceptive methods which are well covered in other texts. Instead, it is an eminently practical book. It gives an overview of the public health and GP perspective for the delivery of family planning services, covers the ethical dilemmas and the medical legal pitfalls involved, and gives practical advice in the management of frequently encountered family planning issues. Many of these areas are rarely covered in family planning books. For example, it lists the seven point guidelines for doctors performing intimate examinations aimed at avoiding patient complaint and gives advice for managing emergency contraceptives and encouraging young people to seek family planning advice. It emphasises the team approach, especially the roles of the practice nurse and the GP receptionist. The information is clearly displayed with concise text, diagrams, and bullet points where appropriate. It is obvious that the author and the other contributors are involved in the day to day clinical care and are keen to share their extensive knowledge and practical skills with as wide an audience as possible. The book has been carefully written so that it will be accessible to healthcare professionals for use in their own practices.

CATHERINA THEIAS

NOTICES

European Conference on Toxic Shock Syndrome—Royal Society of Medicine, London, 10-12 September 1997
Further details: Marti Adair. Tel: +44 171 290 2981.

6th Congress of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venerology (EADV)—Dublin, 11-15 September 1997
37th Annual Meeting of the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapeutics (ICAAC), 28 September-1 October 1997, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Further details: American Society for Microbiology (ASM), Meetings Dept, 1325 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20005-4171, USA. Tel: 202-924-9207 or 202-924-9206; Fax 202-924-9267.

The Annual Scientific Meeting of The Genitourinary Physicians Colposcopy Group—The Stakks Leicester, 4-5 October 1997
Further details: Dr Emile T Morgan, St Luke's Hospital, Bradford. Tel: 01274 365088.


Women and Children with HIV and AIDS, 10 October 1997
A workshop to be held at Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital, London. Applications to: Symposium Secretary, RCPMS Institute of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital, Goldhawk Road, London W6 0XG. Tel: 0181-383 3904; Fax: 0181-383 8555; email: sympreg@rpms.ac.uk

6th European Conference on Clinical Aspects and Treatment of HIV Infection, 11-15 October 1997, Hamburg, Germany
Further details: Professor Dr M Dietrich, Sixth European HIV-Conference, Bernhard-Nocht-Institute for Tropical Medicine, Bernhard-Nocht-Strasse 74, D-20359 Hamburg, Germany. Tel: +49-40-31182 390; Fax +49-40-31182 394.

Sixth Regional Symposium on The Design and Method of Clinical Trials, 16-17 October 1997, at UCSF's Laurel Heights Campus in San Francisco, California, USA
Further details: Lynda McNeal, Office of Continuing Medical Education, University of California, San Francisco, CA 94143-0742, USA. Tel: (415) 476 4251; Fax: (415) 476-0318.

Association of Genitourinary Medicine (AGUM)—AGM—Royal Society of Medicine, London, 17 October 1997

International Congress of Sexually Transmitted Diseases—IUVDT/ISSITDR Joint Meeting—Seville, Spain, 19-22 October 1997
Further details: International Congress of STD, Apartado 6077, 41080, Seville, Spain.

The 4th Annual Courses on Lasers in Cutaneous and Cosmetic Surgery, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 24-26 October 1997
Further details: John Sprague, Office of Continuing Medical Education, University of California, San Francisco, CA 94143-0742, USA. Tel: (415) 476-4251; Fax: (415) 476-0318.

Gynaecological Oncology, 17 November 1997
A symposium on gynaecological oncology will be held at Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, London. Further details: Symposium Secretary, RPMS Institute of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, Goldhawk Road, London W6 0XG. Tel: 0181-383 3904; Fax: 0181-383 8555; email: symreg@rpms.ac.uk

4th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, 18-22 November 1997, Manila, Philippines
Further details: Dr Ofelia T Monzon, Chair, Organising Committee, 4th International Congress on AIDS/STD in Asia-Pacific. Fax +63 2 711 6693.

Psychosexual Medicine in Practice, 19-20 November 1997
A two day course on the practice of psychosexual medicine will be held at Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, London. Further details: Symposium Secretary, RPMS Institute of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, Goldhawk Road, London W6 0XG. Tel: 0181-383 3904; Fax: 0181-383 8555; email: sympreg@rpms.ac.uk

British Erectile Disorder Society, 27-28 November 1997
Further details: Mrs Judy Turner, Nurse Consultant, Ravenview, 139 Armitage Road, Rugeley, Staffs WS15 1JP. Tel: 01889 579400.

Xth International Conference on AIDS and STDs in Africa, 7-11 December 1997, Abidjan, Ivory Coast
Further details: Professor A Kadio, Conference Chairman, Programme Nationale de lutte contre le SIDA, les MST et de la Tuberculose, Boite Postale 2113, Abidjan 04, Ivory Coast. Tel +225 24 30 13; Fax +225 24 31 19.

12th International Symposium on Bioengineering and the Skin will be held on 25-27 June 1998, in Boston, MA, USA
Further details: R Randall Wickett, PhD, University of Cincinnati, College of Pharmacy, 3223 Eden Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45267, USA. email: randy.wickett@uc.edu; http://www.fugazy.com/ISBS; Toll free phone number in the US 1-888-FET-GRPS (388-4777); Fax: +1-451 366-8682.

IUVDT European Congress 1998 on STDs and Genital Dermatology, Göteborg, Sweden, 4-5 September 1998
Further details: Dr Gun-Britt Löwhagen, Department of Dermatology and Venerology, Sahlgrenska Hospital S-413 45, Göteborg, Sweden. Tel: +46 31601000; Fax: +45 31821871.

The Atopy Syndrome in the Third Millennium, Zurich, 2-3 October 1998
An international symposium “The Atopy Syndrome in the Third Millennium” on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the allergy unit at the Department of Dermatology, University Hospital Zurich, and in collaboration with the European Academy of Allergology and Clinical Immunology. Further details: Prof Dr B Wüthrich, Dept of Dermatology, University of Zurich, Gloriastrasse 31, CH 8091 Zurich, Switzerland. Tel: +41-1-255 3079; Fax: +41-1-255 4431.

6th European Academy of Dermatology and Venerology Congress, 7-11 October 1998
Further details: Jean-Paul Ortonne, Hôpital Pitié-Salpétrière, Service de Dermatologie, 30 av de la Velo-Romaine BP 69, 06 002 Nice Cedex, France. Tel: 04 92 03 77 14; Fax: 04 92 03 84 43.