

sistent with high level ciprofloxacin resistance. MICs were also performed for benzylpenicillin (> 10 mg/l), ceftriaxone (0.004 mg/l), spectinomycin (16 mg/l), and tetracycline (4 mg/l). The isolate was  $\beta$  lactamase positive and contained the 4.4 MDa Asian  $\beta$  lactamase plasmid as well as 2.6 MDa cryptic and 24.5 MDa conjugative plasmids. Phenotyping demonstrated a non-requiring auxotype and a WII/WIII serotype.

This patient returned from Russia infected with a gonococcus that exhibited both high level ciprofloxacin and penicillin resistance and low level tetracycline resistance. Dissemination of such strains within the United Kingdom has implications for current therapeutic first line therapies which consist predominantly of single dose ciprofloxacin or penicillin regimens.<sup>2</sup> High level ciprofloxacin resistance is rare in the United Kingdom and published cases suggest Spain<sup>3</sup> and South East Asia<sup>4</sup> may be foci for importation of such strains into the United Kingdom. It is recommended that clinical staff seeing patients with potential gonorrhoea obtain adequate travel histories in order to decide upon an appropriate first line antibiotic therapy. Spectinomycin resistance still remains a minor problem worldwide and single dose intramuscular spectinomycin is thus likely to be effective in treating the majority of imported combined ciprofloxacin and penicillin resistant gonococcal infections seen in the United Kingdom. Single dose intramuscular ceftriaxone or cefuroxime are possible therapeutic alternatives in this situation.

We are grateful for the typing and MIC data provided by the PHLS Gonococcal Reference Laboratory, Bristol.

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## MATTERS ARISING

### Genital *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection in women in a Nigerian hospital

I read the report of Amin and colleagues<sup>1</sup> on the outcome of opportunistic screening for *Chlamydia trachomatis* in women seen in the antenatal and gynaecology clinics in north east Nigeria with interest. The prevalence of 9% was comparable with our study population<sup>2</sup> 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 infectivity.<sup>2,3</sup>

Of concern is the dearth of data on the analogous male partner(s)<sup>4</sup> and their consort(s): 18% of the study sample were in a polygamous marriage, untested 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 Nigeria<sup>5</sup> should serve as a catalyst in the development of effective sexual health services, led by obstetricians and gynaecologists<sup>6</sup> 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.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### The Guide to Living with HIV Infection.

By J G BARTLETT & A K FINKBEINER. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. (Pp 440; £11.00.) ISBN 0 8018 5359 1.

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 emotional responses to information about what could happen to us.

As the guide was written from a US per-

spective, 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 prevention covered 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 to 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 dealt with 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 but did so in a 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

**Women and their Health.** By SATISH MITTAL. London: Clarendon Publishers, 1997. (Pp 284; £9.95.) ISBN 0 9529481 09

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, as are 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 "culliningus", the retractile clitoris, and the statement that "genital herpes can be caught from toilet seats", result in the book losing some credibility. In addition, some of the information is

out of date; it was a surprise to read that AIDS is caused by "HTVL-111" and that zidovudine remains the only treatment.

The book's strength lies in its discussion of the less medical topics—for example, the passages on sexuality and sexual problems are written in a very accessible style.

In short, I believe this book tries to cover too much ground; its contents providing excessive medical detail, limiting its appeal to women with a non-medical background, and insufficient accuracy to be relied upon by healthcare professionals.

JO EVANS

**Managing Family Planning in General Practice.** By S ROWLANDS. London: Radcliffe Medical Press, 1997. (Pp 138; £16.50.) ISBN 1 85775 205 8.

This book is aimed at general practitioners and primary healthcare team members who are involved in family planning 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 medicolegal 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 a wider audience. I, for one, am very grateful that they have and I will certainly use the information gained from this valuable book to evaluate and improve the delivery of family planning services in my own practice.

CATHERINA THOMAS

## NOTICES

**European Conference on Toxic Shock Syndrome—Royal Society of Medicine, London, 10–12 September 1997**

Further details: Marti Adair. Tel: +171 290 2981.

**6th Congress of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV)—Dublin, 11–15 September 1997**

**37th Annual Meeting of the Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy (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 202–942–9297 or 202–942–9206; Fax 202–942–9267.

**The Annual Scientific Meeting of The Genitourinary Physicians Colposcopy Group—The Stakis Leicester, 4–5 October 1997**

Further details: Dr Emile T Morgan, St Luke's Hospital, Bradford. Tel: 01274 365088.

**RCP/RCPG Conference on HIV/AIDS Shared Care—Royal College of Physicians, London, 9 October 1997**

**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, RPMS 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

**Sixth 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/ISSDR 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: symposia@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 1PJ. 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 Bio-engineering 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-(601) 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 Venereology, 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 Venereology Congress, 7–11 October 1998**

Further details: Jean-Paul Ortonne, Hôpital Pasteur Service de Dermatologie, 30 av de la Voie-Romaine BP 69, 06 002 Nice Cedex, France. Tel: 04 92 03 77 14; Fax: 04 92 03 84 43.