
Although this book reports the proceedings of the Second International Workshop held almost three years ago, it was then 10 years since the first such conference. The first part is devoted to methodology, prevalence, and incidence of gallstone disease, including three Italian studies using ultrasonography and one from Scotland using an endoscopic cholesterol stone extraction rate. The second part explores the natural history, including a section systematically discussing management of mildly symptomatic gall stones. The third part on risk factors constitutes half the book. The prevalence of gall stones in relationship to thalassemia minor and blood groups is discussed. Studies of ethnic and family factors showed significant associations with gall stones but failed to unravel the underlying mechanisms.

Dietary habits were studied in Japan, exploring the effect of Westernisation on prevalence and type of gall stones. In Japan it was interesting that a 41% prevalence of biliary sludge regressed to only 4.4% one year after delivery, indicating that this does not always lead to gall stones. In the concluding remarks attention is drawn to the paucity of studies in low prevalence societies and in immigrants, and the lack of reliable cross sectional international data. It was proposed that work could be started from the present state of knowledge on prevention by intervention on diet and body weight.

This book is interesting and well organised, succeeding in avoidingstatistical jargon.

NATASHA CICA
Centre for Medical Law and Ethics
King’s College, London

Healthauthority chairs, and NHS managers. Recurring themes were NHS funding, rationing, purchaser-provider separation, research, education, management, and personnel. The result is a pot-pourri, the prevailing fragrance being one of concern about the future of the NHS. However, with a few exceptions, this reader was left with a strong suspicion that the concern was that of vested interests at bay. It is likely that the opinions of the interviewers will be of interest to future historians and political analysts. They will observe that the debate within the medical profession was really about health care provision, not public health. They will be disappointed that the contributors apparently had so few new ideas about the overall management of change in the public and independent sectors, to achieve the social result of better public health.

NOTICES


9th International Conference on Pharmacoeconomics will take place in Washington DC, on August 29—September 1, 1993. Further details from Dr S A Edlavitich, University of Kansas Medical Center, Department of Preventive Medicine, 3901 Rainbow Boulevard, Robinson 4004, Kansas City, KS 66160–7133 USA. Tel 913–588–2790 or 913–588–2795, Fax 913–588–2791.

The Centers for Disease Control is issuing a call for abstracts for its Eighth National Conference on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control to be held in Kansas City, November 17–19, 1993. Topic areas include, chronic disease epidemiology, interventions, and intervention assessment and evaluation. Deadline for submission is May 3, 1993. For more information, contact: Jack Friel, NCCDPHP, Centers for Disease Control, 4770 Buford Highway NE, Mailstop K-43, Atlanta, GA 30341–3724, Tel (404) 488–5390, Fax (404) 488–5962.

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