



The book, to this end, does raise some overlooked issues, like the importance of the initial letter a patient receives about his or her first appointment to see a psychiatrist – the invitation as the author puts it. Yet while effectively and provocatively exploring this topic, perhaps in line with the consultative tradition of the Tavistock, where the author received some of his training, directive solutions

are not as comprehensively looked into as perhaps is possible.

For example the rich potential of this kind of letter in assisting the patient in starting to work on his or her problem, preparing him or her for the first session and even helping him or her to start treating him- or herself by suggesting avenues for self-help, are not discussed.

However, in the rest of the book the issue of improving our letters in most situations is investigated in depth, and the true power of this book is that after reading it, your letters, and your practice, will never be the same again.

Raj Persaud, Consultant Psychiatrist and Honorary Senior Lecturer, The Maudsley Hospital and Institute of Psychiatry, London

forthcoming events

Professor R. N. Mohan, consultant and programme advisor in old age psychiatry, Northern Birmingham Mental Health Trust and Director of Medical Education, Centre for Mental Health, University of Central England, is the organiser of two courses aimed at preparing trainees for the **MRCPsych part II** examinations. The multiple choice questions/patient management problems course will be held on 19–20 July 2001 and the critical review paper preparation course will be held on 12–13 September 2001, both at the Birmingham Medical Institute. Professor Mohan is also the organiser of a **cognitive-behaviour therapy course**, a 1-year part-time course for mental health professionals. For further information on all the above courses please contact Mrs Denise Makepeace on tel 0121 685 6574.

The University of Southampton would like to announce the following conferences: **Human Rights Act** (24 July 2001, Southampton); **Psychosis and Spirituality** (6–7 September 2001, Winchester); **UK Dementia Research Group Annual Meeting** (21 September 2001, Winchester) and **Section 12(2) Mental Health Act 1983 Refresher Day** (7 November 2001, Southampton). If you would like to know more about the above

conferences, please contact The PET Unit, Mental Health Group, University of Southampton, Royal South Hants Hospital SO14 0YG (tel/fax: 023 8082 5543; e-mail: bc3@soton.ac.uk).

Keele University's Department of Psychiatry would like to announce its **Diploma and MSc in General Psychiatry** courses, commencing in September 2001. For further details please contact Miss Tracy Brittain or Miss Louise Alston (tel: 01782 554019; fax: 01782 747319; e-mail: pca02@keele.ac.uk).

Mole Conferences is the organiser of the following conferences: **Mental Health Services Research and Putting Evidence into Practice**, two different conferences being held on 11 and 12 October 2001, and **At the Cutting Edge – the Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy 2001 Conference** (23 November 2001). All three conferences will be held at Regent's College, London, and further information is available from Mole Conferences, 26 Church Road, Portslade, Brighton BN41 1LA (tel: 01273 242 643; fax: 01273 235 095; e-mail: info@

mole-conferences.com; website: <http://www.mole-conferences.com>).

A 3-day workshop in the **Cognitive-Behavioural Treatment of Patients with Cancer** will be held at The Royal Marsden Hospital in Sutton on 20–22 November 2001. For further information please contact Mrs Cindy Ashwell (tel: 020 8661 3006; fax: 020 8661 3186; e-mail: Cindy.Ashwell@rmh.nthames.nhs.uk).

Dr German Berrios, Dr Jeremy Brown, Professor John Hodges and Dr Graham Lennox are the organisers of the **Cambridge Dementia Course** to be held at Homerton College, Cambridge, on 13–14 December 2001. The course is designed for specialist registrars in old age psychiatry, neurology, psychiatry and medicine for the elderly and will cover the assessment and management of Alzheimer's disease, dementia with Lewy bodies, frontotemporal dementia, vascular dementia and the rarer dementias. There will be workshops on neurological skills for psychiatrists and psychiatric skills for neurologists. For a full programme please contact Dr Jeremy Brown, Consultant Neurologist, Department of Neurology, Box 165, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 2QQ.