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Highlights of this edition

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Welcome to the current edition of the Journal which is beginning to succeed in its attempt to place itself as *The* international journal of military medicine; this edition carries reviews, original research and a case report from New Zealand, Turkey, Pakistan and Italy, perhaps suggesting that our message that this journal isn't just for the UK is getting through; just as September's occupational cardiology review will confirm that we are not just about trauma and the nursing special edition will highlight the enormous contribution to military healthcare from those other than doctors. Following the UK withdrawal from Afghanistan it is imperative that we continue to attract high quality research and reviews in order to maintain, and hopefully improve our impact factor and your help in spreading this international, multidisciplinary message is vital. The members of the editorial board are busy marketing the journal around the world at international conferences and if any members of the readership are representing the British medical military community at overseas meetings I would be grateful if they could contact me to discuss the possibility of acting as an ambassador for the journal.

RIOT CONTROL AGENTS

This edition's 'Editors choice' is a review of the medical aspects of the riot control agents. In the return to contingency it is likely that we will revisit our medical

training for civil disturbance situations which both in training and real time may well bring us in to contact with CS and CN gas. This review is therefore timely and comprehensive.

SURGICAL TRAINING FOR WAR IN PEACETIME

Ever since I joined the DMS, the question of how to train surgeons for war whilst in peacetime has troubled many senior minds. During the recent conflicts it has been relatively easy in that the trainees deployed to where the war surgery was, however changes in the civilian surgical curriculum and the splitting off of vascular surgery as a separate 'non-general surgical' speciality have represented this important question. Shastri-Hurst and colleagues present a thoughtful review of the future options available to us. Undoubtedly training surgeons for war will remain a difficult topic for years to come.

VETERAN'S HEALTH

As the burden of Afghanistan war-injured transfers across to the civilian sector as injured soldiers are medically discharged or retire from service, it is pertinent to consider how much civilian GPs know about the needs of ex-servicemen and where they may be able to access help if needed. The article by Simpson and Leach is important, not least because it makes for grim reading as to how little civilian GPs seem to know about how many veterans they care for and what their health care requirements might be.

MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION

Two articles examine the way in which we record and communicate essential

information about our injured and ill soldiers on deployment back to the Firm Base. Cox *et al* have shown that the primary care record is not a reliable guide to recording what went on in a deployed Role 3 environment which may have significant occupational and patient safety implications, which is a finding confirmed by Parsons who implemented a formalised method of information transfer which demonstrated improvement. It is vital that the DMS learn from these studies to ensure that all relevant deployed medical data is incorporated into the primary care record as soon as possible.

WATERLOO

On the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo I am delighted to carry the second of Mick Crumplin's articles on the medical aspects of the battle. Mr Crumplin is a renowned Peninsular war medical historian and his synopsis of the medical aspects of this most famous battle are welcome.

... AND FINALLY

Part 2 of Colonel Vassallo's potted history of the deployed medical facility at Camp Bastion examines the day-to-day working of the facility from advanced resuscitation during retrieval through to damage control surgery and resuscitation and evacuation rearwards. Part 3 will describe the international collaborations that took place.

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