
News and Notes

In this regular column we will be including brief reports, announcements and items of news on developments or events of significance to the field of medical humanities. In this first issue British items feature prominently, but the editors welcome material from around the world. Contributors are invited to send material directly to the editors, David Greaves and Martyn Evans, Centre for Philosophy and Health Care, School of Health Science, University of Wales Swansea, Singleton Park, Swansea SA2 8PP. Email: medical.humanities@swansea.ac.uk; website: www.medhums.com

New Institute of Medical Humanities in UK

Perhaps the most significant single academic development in the UK in recent years is the establishment of a new Institute of Medical Humanities, whose council is to be chaired by Michael Baum, Professor of Surgery at University College Hospital, London. Professor Baum and Dr Robin Philipp of the University of Bristol here report on the institute's background and establishment.

"During the past seven years interest in roles of the arts in health and health care has evolved rapidly amongst health professionals. Much of the present interest is moving beyond advocacy to a recognition of the need for good qualitative and quantitative research to improve the 'evidence base' of health benefits from different and specific interventions and to help justify the provision of services. Nevertheless, an arts-science gradient is clearly recognised. It 'spans the artistic, intuitive, inspirational and subjective viewpoints, and the measurable, objective, deductive, logical and scientific perspective'. Arts practitioners, health professionals, service users

and members of the public are exploring collaborative ways forward to ensure sustainable educational development, appropriate standard setting for group work and for courses and research, criteria for good professional practice, improved ways of disseminating information and better empowering of public action.

"Against this background, Sir Kenneth Calman, formerly the UK Chief Medical Officer and now Vice Chancellor, Durham University, convened a meeting in December 1996 to explore the definition and scope of 'the humanities in medicine'. Arising from the meeting, in March 1998 a two-day Nuffield Trust conference at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park, was held to explore the potential benefit of the arts in medical education, health care environments and the community, and to formulate a strategy to promote uses of the arts in health care planning, policy-making and practice. The conference noted that the humanities have been defined as 'the study of human nature and the practice of compassionate concern for the advancement of mankind's welfare', and that 'the WHO definition of health represents a balanced relationship of the body and mind and complete adjustment to the external environment'.

"A follow-up Nuffield Trust conference in September 1999 reviewed progress in light of the aims promulgated in the Declaration of Windsor, which was drawn up following the 1998 conference, and discussed ways forward for the arts and humanities in medicine. A report of this second conference and *A User's Guide to the Practice and Benefits of Arts in Health Care and Healthy Living* will be published by the Nuffield Trust later this year. This initiative has now been endorsed by the President of the UK General Medical Council; the Chairman of Council of the British Medical Association; the Chairman of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals of

UK Universities; Sir William Reid, former Health Service Commissioner for England; Baroness Hayman and Baroness Jay, former Under-Secretaries of State for Health; the Right Honourable Chris Smith MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Right Honourable Mr Alan Howarth, MP, Government Minister for the Arts.

"In Autumn 1999 the Nuffield Trust helped to establish a Centre for the Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine (CAHHM) at Durham University [see below], and a new Institute of Medical Humanities. The institute, with a council chaired by Professor Michael Baum, and with an expanding federation of collaborating/partner centres dedicated to the promotion of arts and humanities in health care, is now setting up research projects and courses for trainee doctors and other health professionals (using the WHO collaborating centre model). The collaboration is studying:

- the evidence base;
- educational and research needs;
- priorities for service development, and policies to help develop these areas.

"Anticipated benefits from the work of the institute include:

- more compassionate, intuitive doctors and other health practitioners;
- improved patient empowerment through creative expression;
- reduced dependence on antidepressant and anxiolytic medication, and enhanced confidence, self reliance and mental health of individuals and communities and reduced social exclusion.

"The institute aims eventually to become a network of collaborating entities sharing ownership and a common goal.

"The continuing development of the institute will be reported in future issues of this journal and, it is hoped, via a linked website. Professor Baum can be contacted c/o the Nuffield

Trust, 59 New Cavendish St, London W1M 7 RD

New academic centre at the University of Durham

As reported in the previous item, the national institute's establishment is accompanied by the founding of a Centre for Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine at the University of Durham (CAHHM). Its first director, Dr Jane Macnaughton, writes:

"The year 2000 is an exciting year for developments in the arts and humanities in health and medicine. Alongside a number of national initiatives in the United Kingdom, a new Centre for the Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine was established in January 2000 by the University of Durham under my direction. The centre has administrative support from the Nuffield Trust. Until taking up this post, I was a part-time GP and lecturer in general practice at the University of Glasgow and had set up modules there using philosophy and literature in the teaching of medical students.

"The new Durham centre is largely the brainchild of Durham's new Vice Chancellor, Sir Kenneth Calman, who has a long-held interest in the humanities in medical education. The North East has been involved in community-based arts and health projects for more than a decade. Moreover the University of Durham, which already has a reputation for excellence in education and research in the arts and humanities, is to open a new medical school in October 2001, offering opportunities for innovation in the curriculum. As the new director of the Centre for the Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine I am keen to make use of these strengths in building up new teaching and research activities.

"The centre will be dedicated to the role of the arts and humanities in the improvement of the quality of com-

munity life and of the lives of individual patients and health professionals. In addition to this broad aim, it will also: raise awareness of the new 'specialties' of medical humanities and arts in health amongst health care workers, NHS trusts and universities; and encourage and facilitate career development in the new specialties.

"The CAHHM will go about achieving these aims by educational activities, research, cooperation with other agencies and by dissemination and publication of information and research work.

"This is an ambitious remit, and this journal's next issue will feature a fuller report on the centre's launch, its early academic endeavours and its collaboration with other UK academic centres via the Federation for Medical Humanities. I can be contacted at:

CAHHM, University of Durham Business School, Mill Hill Lane, Durham DH1 3LB

Forthcoming events

The Fourth International Conference on Philosophy and Psychiatry, *Madness, Science and Society*, takes place in Florence, Italy, 26-29 August 2000. Details from the organising secretariat, CSS Viale G Mazzini 70, 50132 Firenze, Italy, or visit website <http://www.dadacasa.com/socitpsic>

A new international symposium, *Philosophy Meets Medicine*, takes place in Helsinki, Finland, at the Gyllenberg Foundation, 14-16 September 2000. The foundation can be contacted by email at: stiftelsen@gyllengerb-foundation.fi

Another conference in its fourth year is *Philosophy of Nursing Theory and Evidence*, at University of Wales Swansea, 18-20 September 2000. Details from Dr S D Edwards, School of Health Science, University of Wales Swansea, SA2 8PP, UK.

Educational programmes in medical humanities

The education section in this issue reports on special study modules at the Royal Free and University College Medical School; programmes are also planned at the University of Durham, which it is hoped will be the subject of a report in the next issue.

Postgraduate study in medical humanities is in its fourth year in the shape of the MA (Wales) in Medical Humanities at the University of Wales Swansea. Details from the administrator, Mrs Anne Edwards, Centre for Philosophy and Health Care, University of Wales Swansea, SA2 8PP, UK, or by email at A.Edwards@Swansea.ac.uk

Combined undergraduate study is also available at University of Wales Swansea, in the BSc in Medical Sciences and Humanities, a scheme developed in collaboration with the University of Wales College of Medicine at Cardiff. Details from Mrs Anne Edwards as above.

The journal has also received details of a humanities programme at the Sydney Institute of Palliative Medicine, University of Sydney, Australia. Details from the Department of Palliative Care, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Missenden Road, Camperdown, New South Wales, 2050, Australia.

Call for papers

For the second and third issues of *Medical Humanities* we plan to continue the general theme of establishing and promoting discussion on the nature, identity, role and operation of the integrated conception of the medical humanities, and we take this opportunity to call for the submission of contributions to this discussion. Future issues will include attention to specific themes, and the first of these will be announced in the December issue.