

EDITORIAL

What's in this issue

In keeping with the international nature of the *Primary Care Respiratory Journal (PCRJ)*, we have papers in this issue written by authors from Canada, Sweden, Greece, Mexico, The Netherlands and the USA, as well as Scotland and other parts of the UK. This is entirely appropriate, since this issue will be available on the stands at the 2007 European Respiratory Society meeting in Stockholm – an international meeting which traditionally has a sizeable number of delegates from primary care and which starts with a Primary Care Day on Saturday September 15th.

We have a slightly different format to the 'What's in this issue' editorial this time round, and we would be delighted to receive any feedback from you regarding its content and layout – write to us at info@gpiag.org. This August 2007 issue of the *PCRJ* – Vol 16, number 4 – has numerous highlights;

- The editorial by Haughney *et al.*¹ describes the excellent work in Scotland on the management of children with asthma. Under the auspices of the National Health Service Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) initiative, and following the establishment of development groups with substantial patient representation, criteria and standards have been set for asthma services for children and young people. The outcome of the group's deliberations are available online (www.nhshealthquality.org), and the application of these guideline-derived standards is likely to have a considerable impact on the quality of care for children with asthma in Scotland.
- The review by Mitchell and Nagel² is an extremely good summary of the role of valved holding chambers (VHCs – 'spacer devices') and their use in the delivery of medication to the lungs for patients with asthma and COPD.
- The qualitative study by Arne *et al.*³ provides a fascinating insight into the perceptions of patients with COPD at the point when they are newly-diagnosed. Using grounded theory methodology, the authors have elicited various key components in patients' perception of their COPD – one of the main ones being 'Shame' at having a disease which they consider to be self-inflicted and caused by their smoking.
- The paper by Karachaliou *et al.*⁴ reports the prevalence of sleep-related symptoms in 1500 patients with respiratory disease who completed a questionnaire on symptoms

related to sleep apnoea or hypopnoea; the high prevalence of sleep-related symptoms in COPD patients as opposed to those with asthma, means that they are more at risk of sleep disturbance.

- Lyn-Cook *et al.*⁵ report an excellent study from Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, USA; 167 inner-city adult asthma patients were questioned on their beliefs about, and adherence to, influenza vaccination. Vaccination beliefs and physician recommendation were associated with influenza vaccination rates.
- Garrod *et al.*⁶ assessed the relationship between markers of systemic inflammation and functional status in patients with COPD. Forty-one patients with COPD were graded according to the MRC dyspnoea scale, completed the St George's Respiratory Questionnaire, and had their inflammatory marker levels measured; the authors conclude that inflammatory markers, particularly CRP, may be useful markers in the assessment of COPD severity in primary care.
- The paper by Lloyd *et al.*⁷ reports the results of a discrete choice experiment which aimed to assess the relative importance of different attributes of asthma and its treatment. Data was collected from patients in Spain, the Netherlands and the UK. Patients placed high priority on the avoidance of symptoms and asthma attacks requiring medical intervention.

We also include in this issue a short report by Ahmed *et al.* on the screening and treatment of depression in COPD patients in one general practice,⁸ a case report from Mexico on a patient with pigeon hypersensitivity pneumonitis,⁹ and our Journal round-up section has two reviews – written by Alan Kaplan, one of our International Editorial Board members – of recent papers on lung volume reduction surgery¹⁰ and the addition of salmeterol or salmeterol/fluticasone to tiotropium in the management of moderate to severe COPD.¹¹

The letter from Glenis Scadding¹² challenges the authors and publishers of evidence-based guidelines on the management of allergic rhinitis to update their guidelines to include advice on intranasal corticosteroids, the most effective treatment at present. Finally, our News section gives an update on the activities of the GPIAG, the IPCRG, and other related organisations worldwide.

References

1. Haughney J, Small I, Davison H, Kohli HS. Standards for children with asthma in Scotland. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):205-06. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00057
2. Mitchell JP, Nagel MW. Valved holding chambers (VHCs) for use with pressurised metered-dose inhalers (pMDIs): a review of causes of inconsistent medication delivery. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):207-14. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00034
3. Arne M, Emtner M, Janson S, Wilde-Larsson B. COPD patients' perspectives at the time of diagnosis: a qualitative study. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):215-221. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00033
4. Karachaliou F, Kostikas K, Pastaka C, Bagiatis V, Gourgoulisian KI. Prevalence of sleep-related symptoms in a primary care population – their relation to asthma and COPD. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):222-8. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00045
5. Lyn-Cook R, Halm EA, Wisnivesky JP. Determinants of adherence to influenza vaccination among inner-city adults with persistent asthma. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):229-35. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00056
6. Garrod R, Marshall J, Barley E, Fredericks S, Hagan G. The relationship between inflammatory markers and disability in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):236-40. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00047
7. Lloyd A, McIntosh E, Rabe KF, Williams A. Patient preferences for asthma therapy: a discrete choice experiment. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):241-8. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00052
8. Ahmed K, Kelshiker A, Jenner C. The screening and treatment of undiagnosed depression in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in a general practice. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):249-51. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00048
9. Aguilar León DE, Novelo Retana V, Hernández-Pando R, Arellano J, García Ortiz L, Cano Valle F, Martínez-Cordero E, The Interdisciplinary group for the study of extrinsic allergic alveolitis. Pigeon hypersensitivity pneumonitis: immunohistochemical demonstration of the causative antigen in the lung. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):252-6. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00046
10. Kaplan A. Lung volume reduction surgery vs medical therapy for severe emphysema. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):258. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00054
11. Kaplan A. Effects of tiotropium combined with either salmeterol or salmeterol/fluticasone in moderate to severe COPD. *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):258-60. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00055
12. Scadding GK. Allergic rhinitis: helping doctors to make better decisions? *Prim Care Resp J* 2007;**16**(4):261. doi:10.3132/pcrj.2007.00053

Paul Stephenson

Deputy Editor, *PCRJ*; The Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice, Haverhill, Suffolk, UK.

*Mark L Levy

Editor-in-Chief, *PCRJ*; Senior Clinical Research Fellow, Allergy and Respiratory Research Group, Division of Community Health Sciences: GP Section, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK.

*Correspondence:

c/o GPIAG, Smithy House, Waterbeck, Lockerbie, DG11 3EY, UK.
Tel: +44 (0)1461 600639 Fax: +44 (0)1461 207819
E-mail: marklevy@animalswild.com

Available online at <http://www.thepcrj.org>