Nevertheless, a positive attitude for continued participation in the audit process was achieved, and we ultimately found the experience rewarding and educational.

ANISH BAHRA
St George’s Hospital, London SW17

VALENTINA

NAHEED AHMAD
NOAM BRONZITE
SIAN HOWELL
ONN MIN KON

RICHARD SLACK
Audit office, St Albans City Hospital, St Albans Hertfordshire AL3 5PM


Yardley MF. Tonsillectomy, adenoidectomy and adenotonsillectomy: are they safe day case procedures? J Laryngol Otol 1992; 106:299-300.


AUTHOR’S REPLY — Putting aside the particular diagnosis which prompted the political debate, I do not in any way alter my views of the current management of glue ear, which remains an area of public and professional concern. The Audit Commission, which performed the audit of day surgery in 1991, was well aware of the shortcomings of the hospital episode system and therefore did not rely on it, as explained in the reply Mr Bull quotes. One of the several advantages of day surgery is that it is considerably cheaper than inpatient care. The resources released can be redeployed to reduce the time patients are currently having to wait. One use of such resources could be audiometry services, thus reducing waiting times for investigations of middle ear functioning.

NICK BLACK
Department of Public Health and Policy Health Services Research Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London WC1E 7HT


Clinical audit project

The clinical audit project is concerned with the development of audit in four therapeutic professions: clinical psychology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and speech and language therapy. Commissioned by the Department of Health, the work is being carried out by experienced social science researchers and policy analysts in health studies from two units: Maurice Kogan and Tim Packwood from the Centre for the Evaluation of Public Policy and Practice, Brunel University, and Sally Redfern, Sarah Robinson, Ian Norman, and Anémone Kober from the Nursing Research Unit, King’s College, University of London.

The aim of the project is to work with the four professions to develop and evaluate a set of models on which their audit activities could be based. The models are likely to contain components specific to each profession as well as a common core, and they will constitute a logical development of the work undertaken by Professor Charles Normand and colleagues that advocated a common framework for audit in these four professions.

The project’s current phase – interviewing key people with knowledge of audit in these professions, selecting case studies, and devising interview schedules – is almost complete. The next phase will comprise, for each case study, interviews with people in each profession who are involved in audit activities and with members of other professions or groups whose work may impact on these activities. The data will be analysed to identify generic and specialist principles of audit and components of audit and those issues in which there is agreement or disagreement within and between the four professions. The aim will be to produce a detailed set of draft models for audit practice for discussion with the professions.

Any enquiries about the project should be addressed to Anémone Kober, Nursing Research Unit, King’s College, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8TX (tel 071 872 3060/3057; fax 071 872 3069).

MAURICE KOGAN
Centre for the Evaluation of Public Policy and Practice, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex

SALLY REDFERN
Nursing Research Unit, King’s College, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8TX

1 Normand C. Clinical audit in professions allied to medicine and related therapy professions. Belfast: Health Care Research Unit, Queen’s University, 1991. (Report to the Department of Health on a pilot study.)

BOOK REVIEWS


Alexandra Giraud wants hospital doctors in France to take charge of the evaluation of medical practice rather than submitting to it as an external constraint. Medically qualified, with degrees in politics (Paris) and public health (Yale), she was responsible from 1987 to 1990 for the Service for the Evaluation of Health Care