

ABSTRACTS

Risks of treating leprosy in a general hospital: Rachel Mathai P. S. S. Rao and C. K. Job (Dept. Dermatol Venereol, CMC Hosp, Vellore), *Int J Lepr*, 1980; 48 : 298-302.

The Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, with 1208 beds, is situated in an endemic area in which the prevalence of leprosy among adults is 3.4%. Two percent of the beds are occupied by leprosy patients, and about 4000 are seen as out-patients per year. They share with other patients all medical, nursing, laboratory, and other services. The impact of these attitudes and practices on the incidence of leprosy among staff and students was studied.

This hospital has 2665 staff, including housekeeping personnel, technicians, nurses and doctors. There are 777 medical, nursing and paramedical students. Every employee and student is screened prior to entry into this institution and subjected to routine annual examinations. Of those who at initial screening had no evidence of leprosy, 24 acquired the disease. Sixteen had tuberculoid, two borderline, and six indeterminate leprosy. The attack rate of 0.7% is significantly lower than the incidence or prevalence of leprosy in the area.

Factors contributing to this low attack rate are discussed with particular reference to age, sex, educational background, residential status, and area of work. It is suggested that staff and students serving leprosy patients for whom no isolation is practised do not carry any additional risk of acquiring clinical leprosy.

Application of clinical and histopathological classification of leprosy: V. N. Sehgal, R. V. Koranne, M. Nayyar and H. M. K. Saxena. (Dep. Dermatol Venereol, Safdarjang Hosp and Assoc Univ Col Med Sci, New Delhi). *Dermatologica* 1980; 161:93-96.

A simultaneous clinical and histological study in 82 new, untreated leprosy patients was undertaken using the criteria of Ridley and Jopling. The disparity between the clinical and the histological diagnosis was abundantly clear, because in only 35 patients the two conformed with each other while in others was a shift of one step towards either the tuberculoid or the lepromatous end of the spectrum. In 18 patients from other groups of leprosy, histologic delineation had features of indeterminate leprosy.