



FEMALE PHYSICIANS MORE SATISFIED

Female doctors tend to be happier with their profession than their male counterparts, according to a study of graduates from Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine.

The 10-year study indicated women physicians were more satisfied with their careers than men physicians despite not reaching the same

academic or economic levels as the men, Dr. Betty Hosmer Mawardi of Case said. Only male surgeons scored higher on job satisfaction, she said.

Dr. Mawardi said a major reason for the greater degree of job satisfaction among female physicians was that many of the women took time off to have children and take care of their families. These women worked an average of 35 hours a week compared to 53 hours a week for the average male.

SEPARATE ASBESTOS STANDARD POSSIBLE

There is a "fair chance" OSHA will propose a separate asbestos standard for the construction industry, Pat Tyson, deputy assistant administrator for OSHA, said. Tyson said the agency may come out with a permanent general standard on asbestos by the May 1984 deadline and, at the same time, propose a separate construction standard.

The separate asbestos standard for construction has been requested by several construction organizations because of the uniqueness of the construction industry.

OSHA issued a six-month temporary standard Nov. 4 which established a permissible exposure limit of 0.5 fiber per cubic centimeter and allowed that limit to be achieved through the use of engineering controls, work practices or personal protective equipment. The Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO has submitted a proposal on asbestos to OSHA calling for a permissible exposure limit of 0.1 fiber per cubic centimeter.

MORE ACTIVE ROLE URGED FOR ACS

Twenty-four scientists, including former Assistant Labor Secretary Eula Bingham, have called for more effort toward worker protection from exposure to known and potential carcinogens by the American Cancer Society (ACS).

In a letter to Lane W. Adams, executive vice president of ACS, the group of scientists urged the society to give more consideration to animal data in determining whether a substance is a human carcinogen in revisions of the 1982 "Guidelines for Advice to the Public on Human Carcinogens." Failing this, the scientists said the organization should "apply its resources aggressively to restrict the use of agents for which there is epidemiological evidence of carcinogenicity."

The scientists said the society's 1982 guidelines "trigger ACS warnings" about cancer hazards "only when epidemiological data prove carcinogenicity." Where animal data constitute the only evidence of carcinogenicity, the guide-

lines, "allow, but do not require, ACS action," they said.

The letter stated ACS should take strong public positions on the control of carcinogens by lobbying and participating in administrative rule-making on asbestos, benzene, nickel and beryllium, for example.

Irving Rimer, ACS spokesman, said the society's guidelines do recognize findings from animal studies, even though primary weight is given to epidemiological results. The organization has issued statements on such substances as benzene and formaldehyde even in the absence of human data, Rimer said.

MDA SUSPECTED AS CANCER RISK

As many as 13,000 workers are estimated to be exposed to a chemical used in making rigid polyurethane foams which may pose a significant risk of cancer according to NIOSH.

NIOSH is currently developing a suitable test protocol for a urine test for workers exposed to 4,4-methylenedianiline (MDA).

Tests on a related substance, methylenedianilinehydrochloride, found the chemical produced cancer in both sexes of rats and mice at two dose levels. A preliminary risk assessment based on National Toxicology Program bioassay studies on the dichloride salt showed that an exposure level of 0.1 ppm appears to pose a significant risk of cancer in humans as well.

ILO ISSUES VOL.2 OF ENCYCLOPEDIA

The International Labor Office has made available the second volume of a third revised edition of the *Encyclopedia of Occupational Health and Safety*.

Volume 2 of the encyclopedia covers topics alphabetized

under the letters L-Z and includes more than 1,300 pages of illustrated reference information on health and safety topics. The first edition of the encyclopedia was published in 1930. A second edition was produced in 1971.

Copies of the two-volume encyclopedia may be ordered for \$155 from the International Labor Office, Washington Branch Sales Office, 1750 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20006, telephone (202) 376-2315.

OSHA ISSUES RULE FOR RIM WHEELS

A final rule on single piece rim wheels was issued by OSHA Feb. 2. The rule requires employers to protect workers from exploding rim wheels with barriers or restraining devices and to train workers to handle rim wheels safely.

Restraining devices must be able to withstand the force of a tire separating from the wheel rim at 150 percent of the maximum tire air pressure specification for the type tire being serviced according to the rule. Restraining devices currently being used for multi-piece rim wheels are allowed as well as barriers not specifically designed as restraining devices.

Employers must visually inspect the restraining devices daily and devices which are repaired must be certified as meeting the strength requirements by the manufacturer or a registered professional engineer.

Under the training provision of the rule, employers must train employees in the proper techniques of handling rim wheels safely. The standard primarily covers about 322,000 workers in retail gasoline stations and garages.

The estimated cost of the new rule is about \$2.5 million in the first year and \$900,000 in subsequent years according to OSHA. A brochure detailing provisions of the new rule is available from the agency. For a copy of "Servicing Sin-

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LARGE OVERCHARGE BY HOSPITALS FOUND

An audit of 665 hospitals in all geographical areas by American Claims Evaluation, Inc. of Jericho, N.Y., showed that 11 percent of all U.S. hospitals studied charged nearly a half million dollars to private industry for services never delivered, an article in the American Medical Association's *American Medical News* reported.

If those results held true for the rest of the hospitals in the country, the claims evaluation service estimated the total money spent on undelivered services could add up to as much as \$5 million.

June Novak, the director of American Claims, said the largest errors had been found in bills coming from southern California, southern Florida, New York, Texas and Massachusetts. She said that teach-



ing hospitals were the greatest offenders.

American Claims has been in the business of evaluating claims for two years, using nurses based throughout the country to aid in their audits. American Claims conducts its audits for the benefit of insurance companies, third-party payers, self-funded companies and self-insured companies.

DIALYSIS MAY HELP POISONING VICTIMS

Two University of Illinois doctors concluded that putting cyanide-poisoning victims on kidney dialysis machines may increase their chances of survival after using the technique to save the life of one such victim.

The artificial kidney machines, which are used to purify the blood of patients

with chronic kidney disease, buys time while doctors can administer the proper antidote, according to Dr. Richard J. Foley, now at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. Dialysis is especially useful in reducing poison levels in the body while doctors attempt to identify the poisoning agent, Foley said.

OSHA TO CONTINUE EXEMPTION PROGRAM

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has extended an experimental exemption program in seven states which was due to end Jan. 1. The program provided for general inspection exemptions for companies using comprehensive on-site consultation services.

Under the program, a company located in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi or Texas is exempted from general schedule inspections if it requests comprehensive on-site consultation and takes action to correct hazards found in the consultation. The experimental program began in 1982 and was originally scheduled to end January 1983. The deadline was extended to July 1983, January 1984, and now July 1, 1984.

In October, OSHA proposed revisions to its on-site consultation requirements that would establish a nationwide program similar to the experimental program.

NICOTINE GUM APPROVED BY FDA

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved a prescription chewing gum containing nicotine to help people stop smoking cigarettes, according to a *Chicago Tribune* article.

Studies show the chewing gum, called Nicorette, can double the success rate for people trying to quit smoking. Nicorette does not eliminate the desire for a cigarette but

can provide a short term alternative source of nicotine for people dependent on cigarettes, FDA said.

Nicorette contains two milligrams of nicotine per piece. The gum was developed in Sweden 12 years ago and is marketed there as well as in Britain and Canada. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals Inc. of Cincinnati will import the gum from a Swedish pharmaceutical company and market it in the U.S.

Charles Rogney, a spokesman for Merrell Dow, said the gum will sell for about \$20 for a box of 96 tablets and is likely to be in stores by March.

NIOSH IMPROVES ASBESTOS SAMPLING

A new method for analyzing and sampling for asbestos which increases the sampling sensitivity by a factor of four over the phase contrast count method currently in use, has been developed by NIOSH. According to a Bureau of National Affairs report, the new Method 7400 is capable of analysis of asbestos with statistical reliability below 100,000 fibers per cubic meter of air, the worker exposure limit now recommended by the institution.

The new procedure has increased the flow rate of sampling to four liters per minute in personal air monitoring and has decreased the filter size from 37 millimeters diameter to 25 millimeters diameter. The smaller area on which fibers are deposited allows the method to be twice as sensitive as the old procedure, according to David Taylor, chief of the Inorganic Methods Development section of NIOSH.

NIOSH has also standardized the microscope graticule which defines the area in which fibers are measured so that it is consistent in all microscopes. A test slide was added which enables fibers only 0.25 micrometers in diameter to be seen.

The Method 7400 is a revision of P&CAM 239 and is

scheduled to be printed Feb. 15. Copies should be available from the Government Printing Office within three months of that date, according to the report.

FOREIGN, U.S. GRADS VIE FOR RESIDENCIES

Increases in the number of U.S. citizens graduating from foreign medical schools and the number of foreign nationals graduating from foreign medical schools and seeking residency in the U.S., have resulted in a shortage of residency positions.

According to figures published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, applications to the National Resident Matching Program from U.S. citizens who graduated from foreign medical schools increased 273 percent between 1981 and 1984. The number of foreign graduates of foreign medical schools who applied to the program increased 312 percent over the same period.

The percentage of unmatched U.S. graduates trained abroad increased to 51 percent in 1983, and in both 1976 and 1983 three quarters of the foreign nationals trained abroad were unmatched for residency in the U.S.

SWEDISH SYSTEM PROVIDES DRUG DATA

An information service in Sweden, which has been called the most advanced information system for the registration of drugs and drug control in the world, may be used by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) according to an article in *Sweden Now*.

Per Manell, head and founder of the Swedish Drug Information System (SWEDIS) visited the U.S. and met with officials from FDA about using the system, the article stated.

SWEDIS is a joint effort of the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare's pharma-

seven Southern states was extended by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for "an indefinite period not to exceed July 1, 1984."

Agency field staff were told of the extension Jan. 16 in OSHA Notice TED 3.

The exemption program, currently in effect in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas, had been scheduled to end Jan. 1 (Current Report, July 14, 1983, p. 158).

Under the pilot project, a company located in OSHA Region IV or VI will be exempted from a general schedule inspection if it requests comprehensive on-site consultation, takes action to correct hazards found in the consultation visit, and conducts an effective safety and health program. The program is intended to "encourage greater use of the consultation services and thereby expand the total number of workplaces reached by OSHA programs," the agency noted.

The experimental program began in 1982 (Current Report, July 15, 1982, p. 148), and originally was scheduled to end in January 1983. This deadline subsequently was extended to July 1983, and then to January 1, 1984.

In October, OSHA proposed revisions to its on-site consultation requirements in 29 CFR Part 1908 that would establish a nationwide exemption program similar to the pilot project (Current Report, Oct. 13, 1983, p. 435). The period for public comment on the proposal closed last month.

Asbestos

OSHA'S EMERGENCY STANDARD FOR ASBESTOS DRAWS MIXED REVIEWS FROM INDUSTRY, LABOR

Diverse views were expressed on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's emergency temporary standard for workplace exposure to asbestos, with some groups urging a less stringent permanent rule and others pressing for a tougher permanent standard.

The agency's ETS lowering the permissible workplace exposure limit for asbestos to 0.5 fiber per cubic centimeter of air was issued Nov. 4, but was stayed by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit Nov. 23 pending a decision on a challenge to the rule by the Asbestos Information Association (Current Report, Nov. 10, 1983, p. 587; Dec. 1, 1983, p. 691). The standard would permit employers to achieve the reduced level through "any feasible combination of engineering controls, work practices, and personal protective equipment and devices." OSHA requested comments on the proposed revisions to the permanent standard made by the emergency rule by Jan. 3.

The R.T. Vanderbilt Company, Inc., New York, N.Y., urged that the current standard be reviewed and revised to clearly distinguish between the asbestiform and the non-asbestiform varieties of each mineral included in the standard's definition of asbestos. In addition, the standard should include a more scientifically precise method of identifying asbestiform fibers based not on aspect ratio alone, but rather on physical, chemical, and mineralogical properties, the company said.

The Associated General Contractors of St. Louis, Mo., stated that making the asbestos standard more stringent will not increase compliance. Noting doubts on the part of several members, the AGC questioned whether full compliance with the existing standard is possible.

William Weiss, of the Division of Occupational Medicine, Hahnemann University School of Medicine, asserted that there was "a significant amount of bias" in the assessment

of epidemiologic evidence contained in the emergency temporary standard. "I note a tendency to minimize studies that show little risk and to emphasize those reporting high risks, especially with regard to fiber type, with regard to the alleged causal relationship between asbestos and gastrointestinal cancer," Weiss said.

There is incomplete review of the pertinent literature with regard to the importance of smoking in the risk of asbestosis, he added.

"While I believe that the standard for asbestos should reduce exposure to the lowest feasible level, I think that the assessment of the scientific evidence on the adverse health effects of asbestos should be made in an objective manner," Weiss concluded.

Carpenters' Union Urges Lower PEL

The Eaton Corporation, Kalamazoo, Mich., endorsed the 0.5 f/cc emergency temporary standard for asbestos, but urged OSHA "not to impose more stringent regulations on asbestos without giving our industry sufficient time to develop and test new materials." Eaton added that, if OSHA is considering an asbestos fiber regulation which would approach the 0.1 f/cc level, it should be done in a reasonable time frame, providing adequate time to the trucking industry to find non-asbestos friction materials which are safe and appropriate for application to foundation brakes.

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America commended OSHA for issuing an ETS, but stated that the protection which it provided was inadequate and that an exposure level of 100,000 fibers per cubic meter is needed rather than the 500,000 f/cm provided in the ETS. The union stated that there is ample evidence that use of standardized counting and sampling methodology can easily produce accurate, reproducible results down to the 100,000 f/cm level.

In addition, the union objected to the substitution of respirators for the use of feasible engineering controls since the ETS only mandated the use of engineering controls "whenever feasible." "Feasible engineering controls exist for most asbestos dust-producing operations and should be mandated before we start requiring the use of respirators," the union said.

The carpenters' union also criticized the ETS because it assumed "totally inaccurate" protection factors for the required respirators. The group argued that since the single-use dust masks cannot be fit tested and provide no seal, assigning them any protection factor is "dubious." Assumed protection factors for powered air-purifying respirators were challenged also.

The union concluded that the final rule should address adaptation of the standard to construction and endorsed the construction asbestos proposal submitted to OSHA by the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO in November 1983.

The Environmental Health Protection Division of the San Diego County Department of Health Services praised the ETS as being "long overdue," but recommended that a further reduction to 0.1 f/cc as an eight-hour average be adopted in the final rule as a feasible level.

Dioxin

BULK OF WORK COMPLETED ON REGISTRY; MID-1985 STUDY COMPLETION STILL EYED

Compilation of a major registry of all U.S. herbicide production workers who may have been exposed to dioxin