



## **This Issue in the Journal**

### **Smoke-free schools? Results of a secondary school smoking policies survey 2002**

H Darling, A Reeder

Schools have the potential to promote healthy behaviour through positive role-modelling, health education programmes, enforcement of smoke-free policies, and the provision of smoke-free environments. A study of the cigarette-smoking policies of New Zealand secondary schools found that most secondary schools are not smoke free, but most staff are likely to support smoke-free status. Proposed strengthening of smoke-free legislation is both timely and necessary to ensure that all New Zealand students are provided with smoke-free school environments, consistent with health education messages.

### **The challenge arising from the cost of haemophilia care: an audit of haemophilia treatment at Auckland Hospital**

P Harper, M Brassier, L Moore, L Teague, L Pitcher, P Ockelford

The long-term complications of severe haemophilia have been dramatically reduced by the use of regular replacement therapy, but this change in practice entails a huge financial burden. An audit at Auckland Haemophilia Centre showed that the treatment of 46 adults and 23 children cost over \$5 million in 2001, over half of which was spent on paediatric cases. The dilemma for district health boards is the inevitable rise in costs as these children grow. The problem for clinicians is increasing pressure to make treatment decisions on the basis of cost rather than clinical benefit.

### **Screening for diabetic retinopathy using the mobile retinal camera: the Waikato experience**

E Reda, P Dunn, C Straker, D Worsley, K Gross, I Trapski, S Whitcombe

Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness and visual impairment in adults in developed societies. Significant retinopathy is commonly asymptomatic in its early stages and regular screening is recommended to detect patients at risk when they can still be effectively treated. Retinal photoscreening using a mobile camera is practical and effective in a large rural area. The Waikato Regional Mobile Diabetic Retinopathy Photoscreening Programme has achieved good ascertainment of the estimated diabetic population for at least one photoscreen. Approximately 79% of the estimated 1996 diabetic population in the region were screened at least once.

## **Differential prescribing of inhaled corticosteroids in New Zealand general practice**

J Hall, A Penrose, A Tomlin, J Reid

The current PHARMAC asthma campaign is aimed at achieving the lowest effective dose of inhaled corticosteroids in adults with asthma, in line with international and New Zealand evidence. This study makes use of general practice prescribing data and reveals that inhaled corticosteroids have not been prescribed in line with reported potencies in New Zealand general practice.