



## **This Issue in the Journal**

### **After hours healthcare for older patients in New Zealand**

A Eastwood, A Dowell

Attendance data was collected and analysed from two Hutt Valley after hours clinics as well as the local hospital emergency department for that catchment's population. Older people attended after hours clinics less than would be expected, especially as the likelihood of illness and disability increases with age. Older people attended the local emergency department after hours at a higher rate than younger people, but at a lower rate than in normal hours. Possible reasons for the choices made by older people about accessing after hours care may include cost, transport difficulties, difficulty interpreting symptoms, and established healthcare-seeking behaviours.

### **Audit of morbidity and mortality following neck of femur fracture using the POSSUM scoring system**

W Young , R Seigne , S Bright , M Gardner

The aims of our paper were to compare the rates of death and serious complications following surgery for hip fractures with those predicted by a published scoring algorithm, and to consider the longer term effects by looking at survival at 1 year following surgery. Within our elderly audit population (average age 83 years), the rate of complications was high at 58%. The rates of death after surgery were 12% within 30 days, and 32% within 1 year. Patients found to be at higher risk (according to the scoring algorithm) suffered more adverse events. The 1-year death rate following surgery is higher than that predicted by age alone.

### **Nocturia in adults: draft New Zealand guidelines for its assessment and management in primary care**

M Weatherall, T Arnold

Nocturia is defined as waking one or more times to pass urine during the night. It is a common and bothersome complaint. The clinical evaluation, investigation, and treatment of nocturia can potentially improve quality of life for many people. An ad hoc group of interested clinicians have developed draft guidelines for the management of nocturia in primary care, and they have rated the evidence to support various interventions for a common form of nocturia: nocturnal polyuria.

## **Surgical inclination in senior medical students from the University of Auckland: results of the 2005 Senior Students Survey**

P Insull, R Kejriwal, A Segar, P Blyth

“Surgically inclined” is a term often used to describe medical students who show a clear preference for surgery over other specialties whilst at medical school. One of the objectives of the 2005 Senior Students Survey, conducted at the University of Auckland Medical School, was to estimate the proportion of students who were surgically inclined. Overall, 20% of students were found to be surgically inclined, with a significantly greater proportion of males being surgically inclined than females. This study suggests that New Zealand may face a shortage of trainee surgeons in the near future due to a lack of surgical inclination in female medical students (as females comprise over 50% of medical students in New Zealand nowadays).

## **Current and former smoking increases mortality in patients on peritoneal dialysis**

G Braatvedt, B Rosie, W Bagg, J Collins

Patients on dialysis due to end-stage renal (kidney) failure have high rates of cardiovascular (heart) disease. This study describes the survival of 1293 New Zealand patients commencing peritoneal dialysis between 1985 and 1995. It shows that mortality is higher in patients with a history of smoking (particularly in patients with diabetes).

## **Māori have a much higher incidence of community-acquired pneumonia and pneumococcal pneumonia than non-Māori: findings from two New Zealand hospitals**

S Chambers, R Laing, D Murdoch, C Frampton, L Jennings, N Karalus, G Mills, I Town

The incidence rates of community-acquired pneumonia and pneumococcal pneumonia were determined for Christchurch and Hamilton. For Māori, the overall rate of pneumonia was 3.03 times higher and the rate of pneumococcal pneumonia 3.23 times higher, than for non-Māori. These ethnic disparities are of major concern. To reduce these disparities, policy planners should review the effectiveness of current antismoking campaigns and look at the possible role of pneumococcal vaccination.