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LETTERS)**A SURVEY OF THE READING HABITS OF THE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP:****MORE CATHOLIC TASTES REQUIRED?****Aim of Study**

At the 1998 conference it was suggested that, regardless of discipline, the membership was likely to read the same literature to keep abreast of current practice in the assessment and management of incontinence. There has been little previous work in this area outwith the sphere of primary care, nursing or trainee physicians(1-3). Clearly a multidisciplinary approach to the subject of incontinence would be beneficial to those involved in its treatment. The aim of this study was to test this assertion and to describe the variety of journals read by members of the society with regard to discipline and time since qualification.

Method

A 3 page questionnaire asking about current journal reading habits was mailed to the society by e-mail and surface mail. The questionnaire asked about discipline, time since qualification and asked respondents to indicate which journals they read occasionally or regularly. A comprehensive list of english language journals was compiled from the Internet. Space was allowed for respondents to include other titles, which they felt were important.

Results

1200 copies of the questionnaire were sent out. 204 replies were received by the abstract deadline (response rate 17%). Replies were received from 44 urologists, 26 gynaecologists, 7 physicians, 7 nursing staff, 4 non-clinicians and 12 others. 26 (13.2%) of respondents had been qualified in excess of 31 years, modal time since qualification was 16-20 years. Replies were received from 29 different countries, the United Kingdom providing the majority of these.

68.4% of urologists and 65.2% of gynaecologists always read Neurourology and Urodynamics, the British Journal of Urology was always read by 64.7% of urologists and 17.3% of gynaecologists, although a further 17% gynaecologists occasionally read the title. The International Urogynaecology Journal was read by 54% of gynaecologists and 7% of urologists and the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology by 61% and 1% of gynaecologists and urologists respectively. The Journal of Urology was read at some time by 84% of urologists and 24% of gynaecologists. The most popular read titles amongst the physicians were primarily urological, with only 4 replies indicating that gynaecological journals were consulted. Nursing staff reported reading primarily gynaecological journals with one nurse reporting that he read what he was told!

Conclusions

This survey provided a snapshot of the journal reading habits of the society membership. The generaliseability of the results was hampered by the low response rate and the inherent bias in the

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data. However, a wide spread of responses from differing nationalities was received, perhaps ameliorating this. As expected, clinicians read journals aimed primarily for their own discipline with little overlap. Neurourology and Urodynamics was perhaps expectedly, as the official Journal of the Society, the exception to this general rule. From this limited study we conclude that the society membership perhaps needs to acquire a more multidisciplinary approach to its journal reading. The recent initiative of the Journal of Urology to include female urogynaecology may encourage such good habits.

References

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2. *Med Teach* 1989;11(3-4):279-83
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