

Shame on the editor for inserting an unqualified statistic with the statement "The perinatal death rate at [Pumwani Maternity Hospital] was 21.6/1000; in 1986 the Canadian rate was 7.9/1000." The demographics of Kenya render direct comparison between the perinatal mortality figures for this hospital and Canada unjustified.

My Latin is a little rusty, but sometimes I think the word "obstetrician" must be derived from "ob" (in the way of; against) and "stare" (to stand).

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*[Originally the perinatal death rate at the Pumwani hospital stood alone. The Canadian statistic was added simply because we thought it answered a question some readers would naturally ask: What is the rate in Canada? — Ed.]*

## Junk mail

**M**any physicians are concerned about the volume of medical magazines and junk mail that reaches their offices and homes. I have found a simple way to receive only the mail that is important.

Since most of the free medical publications are sent to physicians by Southam, publisher of the *Canadian Medical Directory*, one need only write to Southam Business Information & Communications Group Inc., 1450 Don Mills Rd., Don Mills, ON M3B 2X7, specifying which publications one does or does not want to receive. One can also call Ms. Mila Marbida at Southam, at (416) 442-2157.

To eliminate unwanted advertisements in the mail it is necessary to write a letter to each of the following companies, stat-

ing that one does not want to receive offers through the mail: the Canadian Direct Marketing Association, 607-1 Concord Gate, Don Mills, ON M3C 3N6, and the Direct Marketing Association, Mail Preference Service, 6 E 43rd St., New York, NY 10017, USA.

I have done this, and it works! Perhaps physicians as a group can save part of Canada from deforestation and subsequent soil erosion, flooding and loss of wildlife by each of us writing three simple letters. Let us do it for our children's sake as well as for our own.

Arnold Clairman, MD  
B4-5927 Bathurst St.  
Willowdale, Ont.

Last November the Yukon Medical Association (YMA) endorsed a plan to combat unsolicited mail. Physicians were invited to sign petitions requesting that their names be removed from the mailing lists of journals they do not read. The following covering letter was sent on YMA letterhead.

Yukon doctors are concerned about waste, and unsolicited mail is a growing problem. Each Yukon doctor annually receives 40 kg of unsolicited journals — that's 1000 kg of journals that our medical community doesn't even open.

Loggers cut seventeen trees to produce our 1000 kg of wasted paper. If every small community such as ours could save seventeen trees by refusing something they did not want, then global warming would be less of a problem.

The papermaking process produces effluent containing dioxins and other environmental toxins. It consumes energy. Glossy paper cannot be recycled in the Yukon, so it is dumped in the landfill. There it is burned, releasing airborne pollutants and greenhouse gases.

We want to improve the health of our environment. Mailing journals to subscribers who will put them straight

into the garbage can contribute to the problem. Please instruct your circulation department to cease mailing to the individuals on the enclosed list.

Thank you for your cooperation.

There was a lot of discussion about which journals to target, and certain publications were strongly defended: "I read this magazine cover to cover. It's always useful. It cannot be branded as junk mail." The point is that any journal is "junk" if it is not read. Our aim is not to criticize publications but to ensure that the people who receive them want them.

If I continue to receive unsolicited journals I will package them up and send them, postage free, to the minister in charge of Canada Post along with a note pointing out that the rules pertaining to direct mailing should be changed.

Wendy Boothroyd, MD  
2-3089 3rd Ave.  
Whitehorse, YT

## Screening for hypercholesterolemia among Canadians: How much will it cost? [correction]

**I**n the last paragraph of the Discussion section of this article (*Can Med Assoc J* 1991; 144: 161-168), by Dr. Steven A. Grover and colleagues, the second sentence should have read as follows, with the added phrase in italics: "In the United States estimates of the increased life expectancy *among low-risk individuals* after cholesterol levels have been reduced vary from 3 days to 3 months.<sup>25</sup>" Grover notes that reference 25 also estimates an increased life expectancy of 5 to 29 months among high-risk individuals after intensive reduction of the cholesterol levels. — Ed.