

## EDITORIAL

This issue of the journal is published one month into a new era. Changes in the system by which the NHS is funded, introduced on 1st April 1991, will have far-reaching effects on the health service and on medical practice. These changes were described in the first issue in an article by Paul Whitfield and it is appropriate that the current issue should have an article on resource management and information on general practitioner budget holding, both of which will play an important role in the new NHS. Another concern, which will dominate the local political debate in coming months, is that of trust status, which is being actively considered for both Lancaster and Kendal hospitals. There is a news item in this issue on the local consultant ballot on trust status and comment on the proposals will be

welcome for inclusion in the correspondence section of future issues.

An important aspect of the changes is the aim to improve management and strengthen financial control; resource management is an important part of this but it will undoubtedly cost a great deal of money. The optimists believe that once there is improved financial control of resources the government will be willing to commit more money to the NHS, confident that it will be spent prudently. The pessimists have a different view – they see bureaucracy expanding at the expense of patient care.

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Editor

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