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This issue of *European Psychiatric Review* covers a wide range of topics, from genetics and brain developmental matters to clinical and psychopharmacological issues, therapeutic approaches, psychosocial concepts and ethics.

A number of articles refer in depth to the pharmacological treatment of schizophrenic illness: how to classify (or avoid classifying) the various drug modalities, how to assess the effect of treatment on cognitive functions, how to determine whether the effects of medication are early or late and how to assess and deal with the unwanted effects of medication on the physical health of the patient. These are all issues of great importance for the clinician, especially now that psychiatrists are under attack by a considerable portion of the population for abusing (and often for simply using) drugs. Under these circumstances (but also irrespective of them), it is important for the clinician to possess all the necessary knowledge to 'benefit and do no harm', in line with the Hippocratic principles, but also to defend the profession's positions with sound arguments should the need arise.

Brain developmental issues are dealt with by two expert reviews and this fascinating perspective is of major theoretical but also practical importance. The implications of changes occurring during some sensitive periods of brain development for education (in its narrow and broader sense) are of extreme interest for child professionals and educators.

Pharmacological treatment of two conditions where psychiatry and neurology co-exist and interact (attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder [ADHD] and Alzheimer's disease) are reviewed in two articles; further contributions discuss psycho-oncology and the role of dopamine in certain psychopathological phenomena.

Finally, this issue of *European Psychiatric Review* contains articles on the subject of mental capital and wellbeing, and a paper on psychiatric ethics based on a survey conducted by the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) Standing Committee on Ethics (2005–2008).

I would also like to take advantage of this opportunity to draw your attention to an advertisement incorporated in this issue concerning the World Congress of Mental Health, which will be held in Athens, Greece, between 2 and 6 September 2009 (www.wmhc2009.com). This is a unique meeting in that it is organised by a federation composed not only of professionals but also of patients (service users, consumers) and families (carers) and even 'survivors of psychiatry'. Therefore, it will provide the opportunity for interaction and hopefully mutual understanding among these groups. Psychiatry certainly needs alliances, and no alliance can be more important than that of the patient and his or her family. ■