

needs and consultant supervision of the trainee.

- In no circumstances should a candidate be appointed to a post in which he/she would have to "act up" beyond his/her trained capability. This would at best be inimical to the maintenance of standards and at worst dangerous to patients. Moreover it throws an excessive burden of responsibility upon other medical staff in the same and in associated specialties.
- (6) The College will always be prepared to help in a general way from its fund of background knowledge, but is not prepared to hold lists of potential locums with opinions as to their suitability. Advice and confirmation can always be obtained on claims to possess a higher diploma of Membership or Fellowship and on training reached in a higher professional training scheme.
- (7) Judgements of the Employment Appeal Tribunal have underlined the importance of careful

consideration of locum tenens appointments. Evidence presented to this Tribunal has shown that some locums continue to hold their appointments for many years. On other occasions the appointment may be short and temporary. The Tribunal has pointed out that when a temporary appointment comes to an end it is the duty of the employing body to consider the position of the employee. What will then be appropriate will depend on the circumstances of each case (how long he or she has been employed, what the understanding was when the employee was engaged, what the circumstances are of the employing body and so forth). However, the irreducible minimum requirement is that the employee's position should be considered, and that he/she should not be treated upon the expiry of this short-term contract of employment as though he/she enjoyed no statutory rights at all.

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French course at CIEP

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The first French Language Course organised by the Royal College of Psychiatrists took place in November 1988 for a week. It was held at Sèvres on the outskirts of Paris in a building of historical interest. The Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogiques was built in 1756 by Louis XV near the Palace of Versailles as a factory for the manufacture of white porcelain and is now a centre for *le perfectionnement de la langue française!* Groups of about 20 students, usually teachers of French as a foreign language but also administrative and scientific students, make up the 300 or so weekly intake. There were Polish, Hungarian and Norwegian teachers, French geologists and African administrators while we were there.

Professor Robin Priest was the College organiser, and with the directress, Mme Fenouille, and her staff a stimulating programme of French for psychiatrists and visits to hospitals was put together. The lecturers had worked hard to adapt their course to be highly

relevant to ourselves. There was the flavour of a membership viva to the first plenary session when we were given psychiatric terms to define.

The administrative system of the French Health Service became a little clearer as the week progressed, and the similarities and differences in mental health care were highlighted by visits to the hospitals of St Antoine and La Pitié-Salpêtrière. The latter was especially relevant to the three child and adolescent psychiatrists in the group. Professor Michel Basquin and his staff explained the service and the foundation of this famous establishment. French professional hospitality was upheld with a glass of champagne at the end of this visit.

We were steeped in French and French psychiatry for a week and a few of the group visited the theatre to see *La Leçon* by Ionescu. The course is highly recommended for future years to any psychiatrist with an interest in France and French psychiatry and a basic knowledge of spoken French.