



At last – the end of the prothrombin index

Anticoagulation with warfarin is a relatively safe and effective means of preventing life-threatening thrombotic events. However, it is essential that the dosage is adequately and carefully controlled. In South Africa many clinicians have insisted on using the prothrombin index (PI) to adjust warfarin dosages. This procedure does not comply with international practice, where the PI has been replaced by the international normalised ratio (INR). At a Standardisation Meeting held under the auspices of the Southern African Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis in Johannesburg October 2006, in response to major clinical complications, it was agreed that all coagulation laboratories in South Africa would no longer issue PI reports. The only measurements that will be reported are the INR, partial thromboplastin time (PTT) (patient) and PTT (control). This directive will, it is hoped, reduce the major complications that have occurred as a result of poor

communication between laboratories and clinicians. Clinicians who are not in a position to anticoagulate their patients with warfarin using the INR are advised to refer these patients to an anticoagulation clinic. Anticoagulation clinics have been and are being set up both in the private and government sectors. The Southern African Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis sub-committee has established guidelines for these clinics, and they are included in this issue of the SAMJ.

Barry Jacobson

*President, Southern African Society of Thrombosis and Haemostasis
Department of Molecular Medicine and Haematology
University of the Witwatersrand and
National Health Laboratory Service
Johannesburg*

Corresponding author: B Jacobson (clot@nhls.ac.za)

Notice of Intention to Advertise Four Surgical Gastroenterology Fellowship Posts

The Department of Surgery, University of the Witwatersrand, wishes to inform all suitable candidates of the intention to advertise four surgical gastroenterology fellowship posts for the following hospitals: Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, Johannesburg Hospital, Helen Joseph Hospital, and the Wits University Donald Gordon Medical Centre.

These are 2-year posts with a variable rotation through the sub-specialties of Hepato-Pancreatico-Biliary Surgery, Colorectal Surgery and Upper GIT surgery. All four posts will have the same remuneration package. Closing date for applications will be 15 January 2008. Interested candidates should contact Mrs Elmarie McCullough, Head of HR Surgical Division, Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital.

Tel: 011 933 8470

Cell: 0823769563

Email: elmariem@gpg.gov.za

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