

# Editor's Comments

The National Conference is over for another year. Wasn't it great to catch up with old friends and meet some of our newer Infection Control colleagues, broadening our knowledge, and enabling us to move into the 21st century. One of the many things I enjoy about the National Conference is that we can take the time to realise that we are not alone and although many miles separate us, basically our daily issues (or problems) are the same. By working together we can become an impressive team and an united front.

**H**opefully next issue we will be able to publish some of the papers presented at the National Conference. Nevertheless, please keep the articles and letters rolling into the State Journal committees.

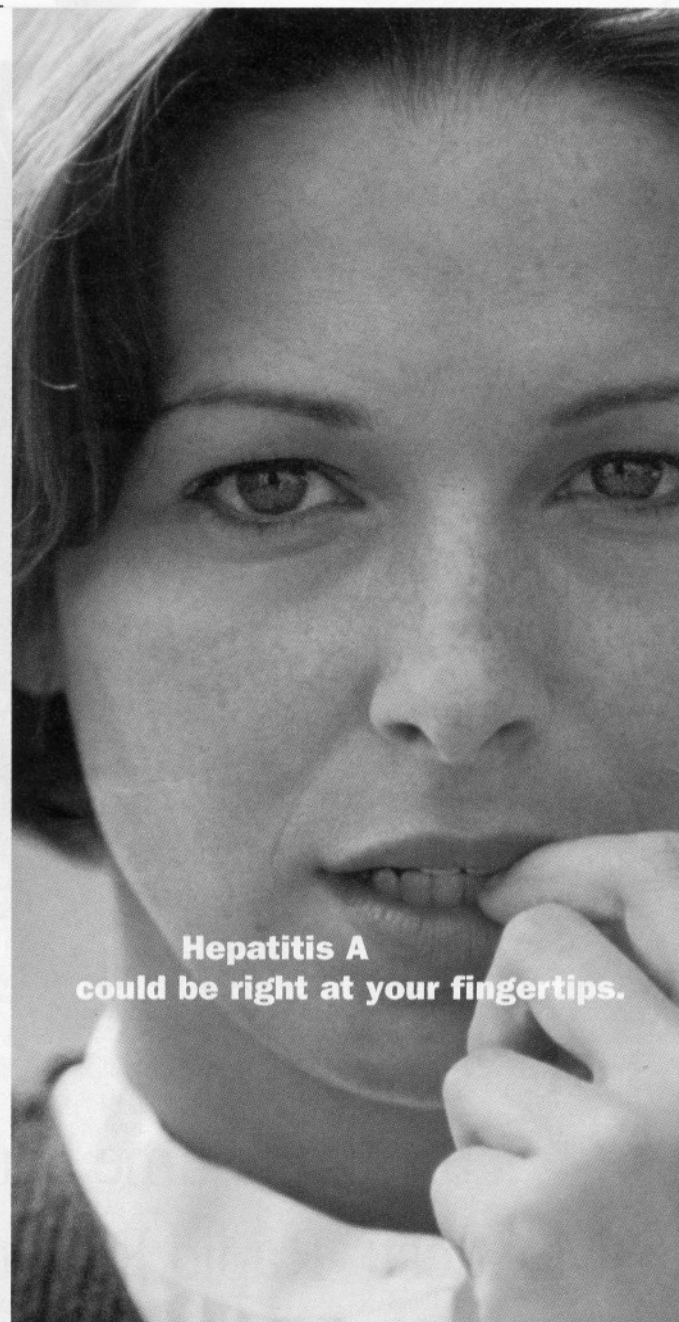
What would you like to see in future issues of the Journal? What can you supply for us?

Nationally there is a lot happening in Infection Control. Are you doing your bit? Can you offer a little more – Yes we are all busy people but sharing our experiences might make someone else's job a little easier.

The National Executive has an extra workload, not only are they your state-elected executive and tireless workers, but they have the same amount of responsibility and work at the national level. Please support these wonderful people and make sure they do not feel they have taken on a thankless task. To maintain the high profile of the Australian Infection Control Association is hard work and our National Executive has done a good job – THANK YOU.

To the NSW Conference Committee, you did a great job, now take a short well earned rest.

Victoria, good luck with the planning of the next conference, it will all come together on the day.



**Hepatitis A**  
could be right at your fingertips.

Catching hepatitis A can be easier than you think. You can pick up the virus by touching contaminated objects (on which the virus can survive for weeks)<sup>1</sup> and then putting your hand to your mouth. You can also become infected by consuming contaminated food or drink, or through direct or indirect contact with faecal matter.<sup>2</sup> And the effect of hepatitis A can be devastating.<sup>3</sup> That's why Government guidelines recommend you protect yourself (see below): So ask your doctor, nurse or health officer about vaccination today.

**The National Health and Medical Research Council recommends the following at-risk groups be vaccinated: childcare workers, nursing staff and other healthcare workers (in paediatric and infectious diseases wards), teachers of the intellectually disabled, staff of residences for the intellectually disabled and sewage workers.**

References: 1. Sobsey MD, Shield PA, Hauchman FS, et al. Survival and persistence of hepatitis A virus in environmental samples. In: Zuckerman AJ, ed. *Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease*. Alan R Liss Inc; 1988:121-124. 2. Advisory Panel on Immunisation of the NHMRC Communicable Diseases Standing Committee. *The Australian Immunisation Procedures Handbook, Fifth Edition*. 1994:57. 3. Hadler SC. Global impact of hepatitis A virus infection; changing patterns. In: Hollinger FB, et al, eds. *Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease. Proceedings of the 1990 International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease: Contemporary Issues and Future Prospects*. Baltimore, MD: Williams & Wilkins; 1991:14-20. Produced as a community service by SmithKline Beecham Biologicals, a division of SmithKline Beecham (Australia) Pty. Ltd. (A.C.N. 008 399 415), 300 Frankston Road, Dandenong Victoria 3175. The SB logo is a Trade Mark. 018HAV0396 90941 S&HMSKBH0075 **SB** SmithKline Beecham

## SOMEBODY, SEND FOR THE BUG BUSTER!

by M. Carlini & B. Beattie

