(30) Medico-Pharmaceutical Forum (1974)
A Report by the Forum's Working Party on Clinical Trials
London: Medico-Pharmaceutical Forum.

Preamble
The report references the following texts and reports (journal articles excluded): Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (1970) *The report of the committee to investigate medical experiments on staff volunteers;* Hamilton (1974) *Lectures on the Methodology of Clinical Research* (see no. (29) above); Harris and Fitzgerald (1970) *Principles and Practice of Clinical Trials* (see no. (22) above); Maxwell (1973) *Clinical Research for All* (see no. (27) above), Medical Research Council (1963) *Responsibility in investigations on human subjects,* (MRC Annual Report 1962-63 (London: HMSO Cmnd 2382, reprinted *BMJ* 1964:2: 178-180); Royal College of Physicians (1973) *Report of the committee on the supervision of the ethics of clinical research investigations in institutions;* and, WHO TRS no. 341 (*Principles for Pre-clinical Testing of Drug Safety*) (1966), and TRS no. 403 (*Principles for the Clinical Evaluation of Drugs,* 1968) (see no. (18) above).

The report was updated in 1987 and published as *Clinical trials: report of the working party on clinical trials of the Medico-Pharmaceutical Forum* (vii + 40 pages).

Aims
The Forum was set up in 1968 to provide a setting for the discussion of problems of interest to both the medical profession and the pharmaceutical industry. At the two yearly statutory meetings such matters were discussed and debated as consultations between the industry and the profession before the withdrawal of medicines from the market by pharmaceutical firms, the obligations of the industry to the profession (and vice-versa) and marketing as seen by the industry. As a result, certain subjects are identified for enquiry in depth; experts are asked to undertake these tasks; and their reports are then analysed and considered by the Forum. Three have now been published: the first on facilities for the early clinical studies of new medicine; the second on academic / industrial relationships; the third as now presented (Preface, page 1).

In 1972, the National Economic Development Office published a report by the Pharmaceutical Working Party of the Chemicals EDC (Focus on Pharmaceuticals, HMSO, 1972), which included comments on clinical trials. The report pointed out that clinical trials in the United Kingdom have a world-wide reputation for quality but that there was room for improvement; in particular poor finishing and confusion on the ethics of payment to investigators. With these and other problems in mind, the NEDO report welcomed the idea of a study by the Medico-Pharmaceutical Forum to evaluate and make recommendations upon the organisation of clinical trials. The Executive committee of the Medico-Pharmaceutical forum considered this suggestion and appointed a working party with the following draft terms of reference:

"To evaluate and make recommendations upon the organisation of clinical trials in the United Kingdom, with particular reference to areas of controversy and misunderstanding and to practical points where errors frequently arise." (Introduction, page 6).

Contents (31 pages)

Authors

The chairman of the Working Party on Clinical Trials is Dr Brian W Cromie (Hoechst Pharmaceuticals) and the secretary is Dr EAP Croydon (Beecham Pharmaceuticals). The members are Dr A Herxheimer (London Hospital Medical College); Dr D Hughes (Wellcome Foundation and London Hospital); Dr DAW Johnson (Crumpsall Hospital and University of Manchester); Dr C Maxwell (Clinical Research Services Ltd); Dr BNC Prichard (University College Hospital Medical School); Dr JM Simister (WB Pharmaceuticals Ltd); and, Dr GI Watson (Royal College of General Practitioners and Peasliake, Surrey). The author of the preface is Sir John Richardson Bt, MVO, Chairman of the Officers of the forum.