BMA Board of Science
In treating individual patients, doctors are often unable to affect the underlying causes of the problems they see on a day-to-day basis. Raising awareness and health promotion can help tackle public health concerns before individual cases hit waiting rooms. Similarly, providing expert medical advice on relevant issues that affect the public makes an essential contribution to a healthier society. As the professional organisation for doctors, the BMA is here to represent the collective voice and expertise of clinicians at these levels in all health-related matters.

The work of the Board of Science (BoS) enables the BMA to publicise key medical evidence to a wide audience. Its broad remit allows it to be both reactive to issues that are of current public interest, and proactive in signposting potential areas of concern for the medical profession. To date, the BoS has produced or commissioned work on a diverse range of topics including smoking, road transport safety, climate change and alcohol misuse.

The BoS supports and promotes medical science on behalf of BMA members. By publishing evidence-based recommendations for action, it is able to advise and lobby governments on key issues that concern the medical profession and impact on healthcare in the UK. Through this, it enables the BMA to inform and influence public health policy for the benefit of both clinicians and patients.

The BoS has a purview of the work of the BMA Library, including its annual awards for medical books and patient information leaflets. The library is the busiest medical information service in the UK and specialises in current clinical practice, careers and professional issues information. It has the UK’s best collection of medical DVDs and videos and the web-based Medline Plus electronic services never close. For further details, please contact the Library on 020 7383 6625 or email us at bma-library@bma.org.uk

About 10 research grants totalling approximately £500,000 are awarded annually under the auspices of the BoS. These cover research areas from heart disease to schizophrenia. All research grants are funded by past bequests to the BMA. The aim of the grants is to fund high-quality, innovative research projects that are likely to benefit patients, population health and or healthcare. Further details on the BMA Research Grants can be obtained by emailing info.grants@bma.org.uk

I did read with pleasure the 2008 BMA publication about smoking imagery [Forever cool – the influence of smoking imagery on young people]. Congratulations to the BMA on such activities and on creating such perfect resources. I am sure also our colleagues in the Czech Republic will be happy to use the publication.

Eva Kralikova MD, PhD, Working Group for the Prevention and Treatment of Tobacco Dependence, Czech Medical Association
Chairman of the BMA Board of Science: Professor Averil Mansfield CBE, FRCS, FACS

A former President of the BMA, Professor Averil Mansfield was appointed Chairman of the Board in 2010. In a career that has spanned both clinical and professional appointments, Professor Mansfield served as Director of The Academic Surgical Unit at St Mary’s Hospital, Imperial College London, where she became the first female Professor of Surgery in the UK. She was Vice President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England from 1998 to 2000 and Chairman of the Stroke Association from 2003 to 2008. Professor Mansfield was awarded a CBE in 1998 for services to Surgery and to Women in Medicine.

The BMA report ‘Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders – a guide for healthcare professionals’ is the first report of its kind in the UK. It has stimulated unprecedented interest in FASD in the media, and more importantly in the medical world. Ultimately it is medical professionals who will change lives in preventing these disorders and helping those living with FASD. In light of this report, we have received accolades from colleagues at the CDC [Centers for Disease Prevention and Control], the NIAAA [National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism], and doctors in Canada, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and several European Countries. The BMA report has achieved what we as a charity have been striving to do for the past six years. The report will help educate the public, prevent many children from being born with FASD out of ignorance, and raise the profile of FASD so schools, social services and support organisations recognise this disability and develop appropriate services.

Susan Fleisher, Executive Director, National Organisation For Fetal Alcohol Syndrome-UK (NOFAS-UK)

The BMA Board of Science report is an extremely useful resource for those directly involved with FASD cases in the UK and internationally. It provides a comprehensive overview of the subject area and is an excellent reference document to provide to others seeking more information about FASD.

Dr Raja Mukherjee, Consultant Psychiatrist for people with learning disabilities, Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Smoking: BoS impact and influence

Professor Richard Doll and his mentor Professor Sir Austin Bradford Hill first established the link between smoking and lung cancer in research findings published in the *British Medical Journal* in 1950. Over the next 50 years, collaborating with both Bradford Hill and later Sir Richard Peto, Doll’s groundbreaking study of British doctors would show that smoking not only caused lung cancer but also heart disease and peptic ulcers. Working with the International Agency for Research on Cancer, he helped identify passive and second-hand smoke as carcinogenic to humans.

Throughout this time, the BMA publicised the public health implications of these findings. In 1984, the BMA and its Board of Science launched a major anti-smoking campaign. The Board of Science has since published influential research and evidence-based recommendations on the use and advertisement of tobacco products. These publications have had a major impact on government health policy and the implementation of tobacco legislation in the UK.

**March 1984**  
BMA launches major anti-smoking campaign

**1985**  
- *Cigarette advertising and smoking: a review of the evidence*
- *When smoke gets in your eyes*

**March 1986**  
New voluntary agreement on tobacco advertising and promotion reached

**April 1986**  
Protection of Children (Tobacco) Act 1986 passed

**July 1989**  
BMA policy for a ban against smoking in public places affirmed

**2002-04**  
- *Towards smoke-free public places*
- *Smoking and reproductive life: the impact of smoking on sexual, reproductive and child health*

**Feb 2006**  
Ban on smoking in public places passes Parliament, starts 1 July 2007

**2007-08**  
- *Breaking the cycle of children’s exposure to tobacco smoke*
- *Forever cool: the influence of smoking imagery on young people*

**Nov 2009**  
Government passes The Health Act 2009 including provisions to ban point of sale advertising and the sale of tobacco from vending machines
For further information on the Board’s work and to sign up for updates please see www.bma.org.uk
Road safety: BoS impact and influence

The BMA has actively campaigned on road safety issues for many years. Through its Board of Science, it has formed policy, lobbied governments and produced guidance on issues including drink and drug driving, speeding and the use of mobile phones while at the wheel.

While measures such as anti-lock breaking systems, air bags, and side and front impact protection have significantly improved road safety, the use of seat belts remains one of the most important preventative measures for protecting drivers and passengers. Since 1973, the BMA has been at the forefront of campaigns to promote the importance of wearing seat belts and was instrumental in lobbying the government to introduce legislation making seat belt usage compulsory for all drivers and all passengers.

1965  It becomes compulsory for manufacturers to fit seat belts in the front of all new cars, although wearing them remains voluntary for drivers and passengers.

1972  A television commercial starring Jimmy Saville that encouraged drivers to wear a seat belt is broadcast for the first time. Its memorable strap-line, ‘Clunk, clink, every trip’, features in similar adverts until 1993.

1973  At its Annual Representative Meeting (ARM), the BMA affirms its policy that the wearing of seat belts should be compulsory for drivers and front seat passengers in cars and light vans.

Over the next 10 years the BMA, with other key stakeholders like the police and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, campaigned and lobbied the government on the introduction of compulsory seat belt legislation.

1983  The Transport Act 1983 passes Parliament making it compulsory to wear a seat belt in the front seats of cars where one was fitted. Prior to the introduction of the Act, roughly half of all drivers and front seat passengers voluntarily chose to wear seat belts. After the Act, the proportion wearing seat belts rose to 93%.

1984  After the success over front seat legislation, the BMA affirms policy, put forward by the Board of Science, to campaign for the compulsory fitting and wearing of seat belts in all new cars and the middle seat in multi-purpose vehicles.

1989  It becomes compulsory for children to wear seat belts in the rear of the car.

1991  Legislation on wearing seat belts in the back of cars is extended to adults.
The BMA Science and Education Department (SciEd)

The professional work of the BMA is managed through the Directorate of Professional Activities and its Board. The work we do is designed to make it easier for doctors to get on with being the best doctors they can be, providing excellence in care to their patients and through health promotion/ill-health protection to the population at large.

SciEd sits within the Directorate of Professional Activities and is responsible for managing the following areas:

- **Board of Science**
- **Equality and Diversity Committee**
- **Patient Liaison Group**
- **BMA Research Grants**

Our committees maintain an influential role in forming public and government opinion on a range of health-related topics. We analyse and review critical matters of interest to the profession, and to the public, and seek to influence government policy makers with evidence-based recommendations for action. We monitor government legislation and consultations, and lobby for changes to address inequalities in health and healthcare, as well as doctors’ training and career opportunities.

We produce information resources and guidance notes for members and every year we award grants under the auspice of the Board of Science for ongoing or prospective medical research.

- Policy reports are usually available as PDF files on the BMA website and published hard copy.
- Information resources and guidance for members are primarily web-based and include extensive signposting to other sources of information.

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