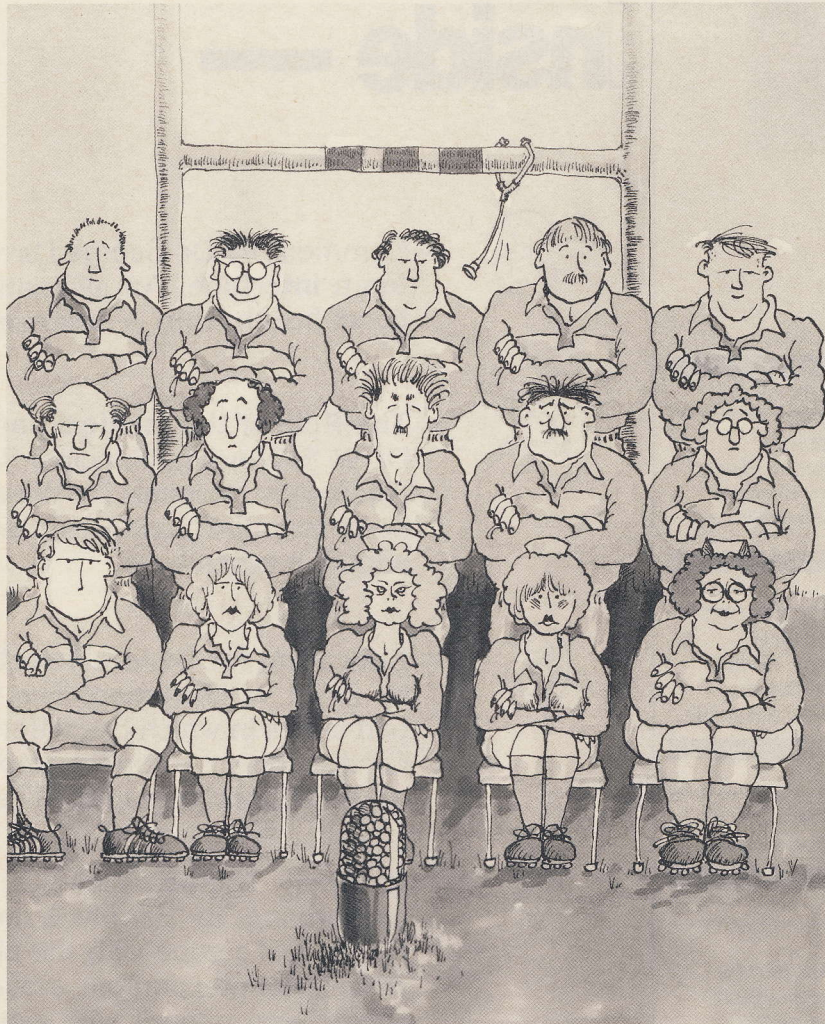


Comment Komentaar

by Dr. George Davie



Contemplating health teams I invariably visualise two situations. In one the patient sits at the centre of a circle of medical and para-medical people. Every one of these people is deeply concerned with the welfare of the patient but often finds that the patient's greatest needs belong in the realm of another member of the team.

There is no obvious leader of the ring and so the patient usually determines with whom he or she should bond.

The other situation is where the GP is in the centre and a circle of helpers form around him facing outwards. The interface between helper and

those served is vastly different in this situation.

The former system needs no further comment. Much has been written about the benefits to the patient of the team approach. The latter is one that needs to gain respectability in our country.

Resistance to the primary physician extending his capabilities by using assistants is still very common. The state, however, has been using physician's assistants in one form or another for many years. Private enterprise is prevented from this practice by law and the rulings of the Medical Council.

Changes will have to occur if the

private physician is to develop an effective health team to supplement and perhaps in some instances to compete with the state system. According to free market theory this type of competition can but lead to the benefit of the community.

Have you contemplated using a team in your situation? How would you organise it?

What would your system of fee levying to the individual and remuneration for services to the state entail? All these questions are at present being studied by the Medical Association.

If you have a contribution to make contact me at Box 27399 Sunnyside 0132. □