

and authority to advise, manage and co-ordinate child abuse services would be an obvious first step in tackling the problem.

We are indebted to those health professionals who completed and returned the questionnaires, and grateful for the scrupulous honesty of their answers. We were also heartened by the many requests received for copies of the relevant child abuse legislation or where copies could be obtained. In addition, the police and an Early Childhood Development centre in the same area have arranged regular discussions and to pool their resources in an effort to increase community awareness of the problem of child abuse in that region.

The need for continued education and examination of legal, ethical and moral issues by professionals who may have to deal with child abuse is essential if we are to make any progress in controlling this malignant social disease.

As mentioned above, it is best to view this as an exploratory study. The problems noted and the findings discussed illuminate the urgent need for further, more intensive and considered inquiry in this somewhat neglected field.

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