



expose program weaknesses because this might disrupt what they consider an acceptable status quo, endanger career advancement or draw attention to problems that will reduce the attractiveness of training programs. This means that any analysis will require input from external sources.

It is in the University of Manitoba's best interest to appoint external experts to assess these tragedies and possible precipitating factors. In this way, similar tragedies might be averted, and the lessons learned could be applied in other centres.

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## Offshore medical schools

I read with interest Milan Korcok's article "After rejection in Canada, more Canadians pursuing career dreams at offshore medical schools" (*Can Med Assoc J* 1997;156:865-70), as I have been trying to gain entry to Canadian medical schools for a few years. The article certainly reflects the difficulties applicants are facing. However, I would like to add some information.

The article did not mention the situation regarding provincial resi-

dence requirements for applications to certain schools. Only a few medical schools are considered national schools. Others pick students from their province first and have only a few places for out-of-province students. These restrictions really limit the number of schools you can apply to, because the chances of getting an interview are slim to nonexistent unless you are a brilliant student.

Another problem is the large degree of variation in what is desired in candidates. The University of British Columbia wants people with research experience and graduate degrees. McMaster University is not interested in graduate degrees and does not give credit for having one because "everyone gets good grades in graduate school." The University of Western Ontario continues to use the medical college admissions test as a weeding tool, a use the test was never intended for.

These problems, coupled with the high cost of application fees, have ensured that well-rounded students with a B+ average have a long road ahead if they want to study medicine in Canada. I suggest that they apply to Irish medical schools. These schools have an extensive recruiting program for foreign students, and application fees are comparable to those

in Canada. The calibre of the education is high, and Irish medical degrees are respected around the world. I will be fulfilling my dreams there this fall, something that the Canadian system would not allow me to do.

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## Healing body and mind

Kudos to Julie Righter for discussing the value of psychotherapy for patients with chronic illness ("Psychotherapy and chronic illness," *Can Med Assoc J* 1997;156:1535). For those who decry the value of attention to "mind" problems in chronic illness, I recommend *The Psychobiology of Mind-Body Healing*.<sup>1</sup> There is a scientific basis for this type of adjuvant treatment.

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### Reference

1. Rossi E, editor. *The psychobiology of mind-body healing*. New York: WW Norton; 1993.

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