

used is not always described in publications providing reference data. Calculation of VA from predicted values of TL and TL/VA for a standard individual shows that breath holding volume was appropriate (near to 90% of TLC) in most of the studies quoted except that of van Ganse<sup>2</sup>; in this group VA was apparently low and TL/VA correspondingly high.

Two other, correctable, sources of error in the small number of studies quoted were overlooked by the authors of the ECSC document. Firstly, the formula for TL/VA in the paper by Hall *et al.*,<sup>3</sup> which is transcribed into the document, yields values that are obviously incorrect. Secondly, there has never been any formal agreement about the exact expression for KCO. Those preferring the form TL/VA have divided TLCO by VA(BTPS), following the convention that lung volumes are to be expressed in BTPS units. Those who have regarded the index as a version of Krogh's transfer coefficient have sometimes divided TL by VA(STPD), yielding a result which is systematically higher by 20%. This accounts for the high value obtained by Teculescu and Stanescu,<sup>4</sup> also uncorrected in the ECSC document.

There are therefore three reasons why the ECSC summary equations for KCO (TL/VA) yield higher values than appear acceptable. The first (low VA) is difficult to surmount. It follows that for reference purposes and as a screening test for normality TLCO is much more useful than TL/VA and the latter should probably not be used in this context.

I would like to clarify the ambiguous heading to the table in the editorial. The figures given are those to be added to the values obtained from Cotes;<sup>5</sup> they are not the arithmetical differences between the values obtained from Cotes and those derived from the ECSC formula.

G LASZLO

*Respiratory Department  
Bristol Royal Infirmary  
Bristol BS2 8HW*

- 1 Frans A, Francis CH, Stanescu D, Nemery JB, Prignot J, Bras-seur L. Transfer factor in patients with emphysema and lung fibrosis. *Thorax* 1979;33:539-40.
- 2 van Ganse WF, Ferris BG Jr, Cotes JE. Quoted by Quanjer PH. Standardized lung function testing. *Bulletin European de Physiopathologie Respiratoire (Clinical Respiratory Physiology)* 1983;19;suppl 5:82.
- 3 Hall AM, Heywood C, Cotes JE. Lung function in healthy British women. *Thorax* 1979;34:359-65.
- 4 Teculescu DB, Stanescu DC. Lung diffusing capacity: normal values in male smokers and non-smokers using the breath-holding technique. *Scand J Resp Dis* 1970;51:137-49.
- 5 Cotes JE. *Lung function: assessment and application in medicine*. 4th ed. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979.

to £5000 from its research fund. Application forms may be obtained from British Lung Foundation, 12a Onslow Gardens, London SW7 3AP, and must be returned by 31 July 1985.

#### **Current clinical management of cystic fibrosis**

An all day symposium on this subject will be held at the Royal Society of Medicine, London, on Friday 25 October 1985. Further information may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary of the Section of Paediatrics, Dr TJ David, Department of Child Health, Booth Hall Children's Hospital, Charlestown Road, Blackley, Manchester M9 2AA.

#### **Current concepts in pulmonary pathology**

A postgraduate course on current concepts in pulmonary pathology will be held at the Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, USA, from 21 to 25 October 1985. Further information may be obtained from Department of Continuing Education, Harvard Medical School, 25 Shattuck Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02115,

#### **Dr HM (Bill) Foreman Memorial Fund**

The trustees of the Dr HM (Bill) Foreman Memorial Fund invite applications for grants relating to study in respiratory disease. Limited funds are available for registered medical practitioners to assist in travelling to countries other than their own to study respiratory disease, and also for support of clinical research abroad. Intending applicants should write for further details to Dr BH Davies, Sully Hospital, Sully, South Glamorgan CF6 2YA.

#### **Indian Chest Society: Fifth National Congress of Respiratory Diseases**

The Fifth National Congress of Respiratory Diseases will be held on 12-15 December 1985 at SMS Medical College, Jaipur, India. Those interested in attending the congress should contact Dr US Mathur, Secretary General, FNCRD, 18 Shivaji Marg, Diggi House, Jaipur 302 004, India.

## Notices

### **British Lung Foundation grants**

The newly established British Lung Foundation is now in a position to invite applications for equipment grants for up