

14074 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

We have brought with us today a number of examples of these journals. Each one consists of a number of drug advertisements plus a number of articles which appear to be independently written.

It is not easy to assess the scientific quality of the controlled circulation journals. Much of it appears, on its face, quite reasonable, tending to be oriented toward review articles and articles dealing with particular clinical problems, e.g., how to diagnose and treat lower back pain. At the same time, however, I must wonder whether a journal that subsists wholly on sales of advertising space to the drug industry is able to present a skeptical attitude toward drugs in general or toward specific drugs.

Editorial Policies

FDA has received complaints from some authors that when they prepare an article unfavorable to drug products the articles are rejected by the controlled circulation journals even when they were solicited by the journal in the first place. The reasons given for rejection are that the article does not meet some unspecified technical standard, but whether or not this is the entire reason is difficult to determine.

Members of our staff have had several meetings with editors of controlled circulation journals asking specifically about editorial policy regarding articles adverse to the product of an advertiser. A common answer is that such articles rarely are received because physicians are more interested in reporting successes than failures and that, furthermore,