
GENERAL PRACTICE LITERATURE

NEW BOOKS

VACCINATION CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND HEALTH ADVICE TO TRAVELLERS

World Health Organisation
Geneva (1981)
65 pages. SF18

WHO has prepared another edition of its booklet *Vaccination Certificate Requirements for International Travel and Health Advice to Travellers*. It points out that the only vaccination certificate for which there is epidemiological justification is that for yellow fever; small-pox has been eradicated and no country can protect itself against the introduction and spread of cholera by insisting on the vaccination of international travellers. Brief advice is given about precautions against malaria and food- and water-borne diseases, and there is useful information about the health hazards in every country in the world (including such unfamiliar ones as Kiribati, Niue and Tuvalu).

S. L. BARLEY

TRAINING FOR GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTICE IN NIGERIA

Ed. C. A. Pearson, A. O. Ajayi and M. A. Okunyade

Ibadan University Press
Ibadan, Nigeria (1981)

89 pages + xvi. Price £6.00

Community health measures such as good water supplies, latrines, immunization programmes, under-five and ante-natal clinics, are a priority in developing countries, especially in rural areas. Until these are provided, it is a mistake to divert scarce resources into providing Western-style medical care. It is against this background that this book must be read.

It is a report of a three-day conference concerned with the launching of formal general practice training in Nigeria. Many of the contributions are polite

introductions and so of little interest, but Elebute and Pearson attempt to define educational objectives, including community health. The book culminates in the proposed curriculum for post-graduate training. For those who have worked in West Africa, it will come as no surprise to learn that general practitioners must be competent at repairing a ruptured uterus and managing malaria and neonatal tetanus, to mention but three objectives.

Half the doctors at the conference were described as private general practitioners, undoubtedly a powerful lobby, the majority of whom probably work in the cities. While Nigeria, with its oil revenue, can afford to lead West Africa in new approaches to postgraduate medical training, it remains to be seen whether it diverts attention and money away from rural community health programmes, both in Nigeria and other less prosperous West African countries. Professor Moore (Canada) implored the conference to evaluate their progress constantly, to maintain a flexible approach, and to remember the other members of the health care team (hardly mentioned at all by anyone else, except David Morley).

Only those general practitioners interested in medicine in developing countries and in curriculum development will find this book of interest. It is obtainable from the Association of General Medical Practitioners of Nigeria, 9 Sam Shonibare Street, Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria.

R. PEPPIATT

THE CHALLENGE OF URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

A. W. Asscher

Academic Press
London, Toronto, Sydney (1980)

209 pages. Price £15.00

This book is a must for the general practitioner interested in the continuing problem of inflammatory disease of the urinary tract. It is a clear state-of-play exposition about a condition which accounts for 5 to 10 per cent of the general practitioner's work. It includes recent advances, such as the role of fastidious and anaerobic organisms, and is well referenced. Professor Asscher is well

placed to produce such a work, being director of the KRUF Institute of Renal Disease in Cardiff.

When, in 1881, Roberts described coliform bacilli in the urine of cystitis patients, the problem of dealing with this condition must have looked easier than it does now, 100 years on, when we are beginning to grasp some of the complexities of the long evolutionary relationship between *E. coli* and the human species. For most of the time and for most of the population, the relationship is one of comfortable symbiosis, and only occasionally does the organism break into the natural culture medium in the urinary tract. Asscher limits his subject by discussing urinary tract infection in its strict sense and devotes only a few lines to the problem which the general practitioner, most of all, has to face, namely that of the proper management of those numerous patients with what Asscher calls "the most taxing problem—the occurrence of symptoms identical with that of UTI in the absence of infection". The way into this problem may have been partly opened by his critical discussion of the significance of significant bacteriuria. The development of the subject is somewhat impeded by difficulties over terminology, which is still rather rough and ready, and indeed the term urinary tract infection is not itself entirely unambiguous, since it could be taken to mean infection of urine, namely significant bacteriuria, or infection of urinary tract tissue. These concepts are not interchangeable.

There is a full discussion of covert bacteriuria, and it is pointed out that many 'symptomless' patients discovered by screening are found not to be symptomless when a full history is taken. Interesting chapters follow on clinical aspects, investigation, sequelae and treatment. I should have liked to hear more of the phenomenon of renal angle tenderness to percussion, which in my experience can be elicited in 50 per cent of patients with symptoms of inflammation of the urinary tract, and also of the extensive group of so-called neurotic symptoms which so often accompany it. However, there will be ample opportunity to enlarge on these themes in future editions which I am sure will be called for. The general practitioner researcher can take heart: inflammatory disease of the urinary tract is as big a pest now as it was 100 years ago. With Asscher's book as a jumping-off platform, there is still everything to play for.

N. B. EASTWOOD