

TEAM-WORK IN GENERAL PRACTICE

David N.H. Greig
 Castle House Publications, Tunbridge Wells (1988)
 175 pages. Price £9.95

Primary health care is not the exclusive prerogative of medical practitioners. Paramedical and other workers vie with our profession to comfort and care for those in need. Doctors need to learn tolerance and respect for the skills and professionalism of colleagues whose way of working they may not fully appreciate or understand. Based on the author's experience and pleasure of many years in general practice this book scratches at the surface of some of these lessons. It gives a simplistic description of teamworking, some methods of communication and describes some shared tasks suited to a team approach. The author then offers sketchy outlines of the work of each member of his own primary health care team, interspersed with his own views of general practice. He explains, for example, why counselling is no part of a doctor's role and how risky he feels it might be to allow patients to become dependent on their doctor. Anyone interested in reading a true account of health care team-work ought to look to Jefferys and Sach (*Rethinking general practice*. London: Tavistock, 1983) rather than this well intentioned but rather prissy and insipid work.

OLIVER SAMUEL
General Practitioner, Pinner

RECALLING THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Sidney Chave (*Michael Warren and Huw Francis (eds)*)
 King Edward's Hospital Fund/Oxford University Press (1987)
 200 pages. Price £15.00

Sidney Chave was one of the outstanding personalities in the field of public health whose experience ranged over the 50 year period from the height of influence of medical officers of health to the present day. In this book he describes how the medical officer of health was at the same time public watchdog and accuser, adviser and initiator, educator and protector. He points out that it is 60 years since Lord Dawson introduced the idea of the health centre with his dictum 'preventive and curative medicine cannot be separated on any known principle'.

The two chapters on the Broad Street pump serve to remind us not only of the devastating consequences of cholera epidemics but also the courage of John Snow in formulating a hypothesis at variance with the currently held views of infection. The meticulous work of Henry Whitehead in confirming John Snow's hypothesis is similar to the detailed recordings of William Pickles.

In a fascinating epilogue Huw Francis traces the development of public health through social medicine to today's community medicine. He emphasizes the need for community medicine to recover the public health attitude of seeing clinical medicine and microbiology as important scientific bases of its practice of prevention. He also makes the interesting observation that the hospital service might have done at least as well under local government control as under the central administration imposed in 1948, and he points out that managerialism at worst became an overarching set of values which saw the characteristic ethics of the various professions and rights of citizens as obstacles to efficiency.

In the light of the government's enquiry, under the chairmanship of Sir Donald Acheson, into the future development of the public health function, this book provides invaluable background material to this debate and should find a place in every postgraduate centre library.

JOHN BERKELEY
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College Publications — Practice Organization

BOOKS AND PAPERS**Doctors on the Move (Occasional Paper 7)**

Describes a revolutionary method of organizing a general practice whereby doctors and nurses move from patient to patient instead of following traditional consulting room patterns. £3.00

Computers in Primary Care (Occasional Paper 13)

This report from an RCGP working party describes current and future possibilities for computerizing aspects of care in general practice. £3.00

Trends in General Practice Computing

Covers computerized prescribing, office systems, computers in the consulting room, attitudes of patients and future developments. An easy-to-read introduction to the subject with plenty to offer those already committed. £12.50

INFORMATION FOLDERS**Age/Sex Registers**

Describes the different types of register, their functions and applications, and how to construct and operate one. Suggestions are made on more advanced registers, and computer applications. £3.00 (£4.00 non-members)

Entering General Practice

Describes most aspects of entry to general practice for trainees and young GPs, including how to present a CV, how applicants may be assessed by a practice, and how they should assess a practice. There are monographs to help women GPs in full time practice or job sharing. £3.00 (£4.00 non-members)

Practice Premises

Concerned mainly with altering or adding to existing premises, the folder contains flow sheets, a possible timetable, and various checklists of equipment and furnishings. Suggestions are made on the financing of premises. £3.00 (£4.00 non-members)

Appointment Systems

Based on the work of the original Practice Organization Committee of Council, the folder covers the amount of time which should be provided for each list size, different booking systems and common faults, together with suggestions on how to adjust an appointment system which is not working properly. £3.00 (£4.00 non-members)

Medical Records

Provides a wide ranging view of medical record keeping, describing the basic components of the good medical record and suggesting how practice records might be improved in a stepwise progression. Different authors discuss different formats for records and the place of interacting specialist registers and recall systems. £5.00 (£6.00 non-members)

Patient Information Booklets

Written largely by the College's Patient Liaison Group, this folder has many useful suggestions for the content and presentation of patient information booklets, together with a useful section on the constraints of advertising. £6.00 (£7.00 non-members)

VIDEO**Management in Practice**

Produced jointly by the RCGP and MSD Foundation, the package consists of a video and supporting course book. It is the first management video that has been specifically designed for use in general practice by all members of the primary care team. A diabetes mini-clinic is used to illustrate the management problems that can result when new initiatives are not properly thought through. £19.50 (additional course books £4.50)

RECORD CARDS

A range of medical record cards and other items are available, including: age-sex register cards, menstruation cards, pink summary cards, obstetric cards, medical summary problem orientated cards (BD1), family and personal history cards (BD2A), drug treatment cards (BD3A), repeat prescription cards (BD3B), flow sheets (BD4), patient questionnaires, pre-school record cards, personal history cards. Prices on request.

All the above can be obtained from the Central Sales Office, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PU. Prices include postage. Payment should be made with order. Access and Visa welcome.