



# BOOK AND VIDEO REVIEW



## **A GUIDE FOR TRAINEES IN GENERAL PRACTICE (2nd edition)**

*John Fry, Peter Martin, Eric Gambrith, Alistair Moulds, Martin Godfrey and Gilliam Strube*  
*Heinemann Medical Books, Oxford (1989)*  
211 pages. Price £12.95

This concise handbook is well suited to the needs of the general practitioner trainee. It is easy to read, the text is to the point, the information is well laid out and the chapters have clear headings. No prior knowledge of general practice has been assumed and this makes it particularly useful for doctors entering general practice from hospital appointments. The chapter on bread and butter medicine, for example, gives sound advice on the common problems which sometimes cause the new trainee the most concern. Other chapters deal with such things as telephone techniques and home visiting, teamwork, the National Health Service and management issues. How to make the most of the opportunity for research in general practice and how to meet the needs of the planned professional service are also described.

This book will be of most benefit to the new trainee, but it does provide a good revision framework for those preparing for the MRCGP examination. Concluding chapters on the examination and job hunting help to make the book comprehensive. *A guide for trainees in general practice* is now in its second edition and it has been extensively revised and updated to accommodate the changes taking place in general practice. The second edition deserves to be as popular as the first.

KATHRYN DALE

*General practitioner trainee, West Lothian*

## **CARING FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY (2nd edition)**

*E Idris Williams*  
*Chapman and Hall, London (1989)*  
283 pages. Price £11.95

This is a timely publication which provides much needed direction to primary care in delivering a service which is sensitive to the needs of older people. The new contract for general practitioners in the UK makes proactive care for older people obligatory. This book considers the special health care needs of very old people and identifies the priorities for changes in the problem of care not only in this country but throughout the world.

As with the first edition, it provides a clear and comprehensive account of the subject. The inclusion of chapters on assessment, the hospital-community interface, clinical aspects and practice strategy are useful additions in this edition. The style and content of the book reflect the personal involvement and experience of Professor Williams as a primary care clinician and

it is not surprising that he seeks to dispel some misconceptions, for example that health is not reflected by levels of mortality and that living alone does not always mean social isolation. The book is concise, practical and easy to read. However, the first chapter on the international scene is rather too compressed and its content is rather disappointing compared with the high standard of information in the remaining chapters.

This is an excellent handbook for all those who are interested in learning to care for elderly people in the community and those who wish to promote this care.

S J JACHUCK

*General practitioner, Newcastle upon Tyne  
and director of Care of the Elderly Project*

## **HANDBOOK OF PEDIATRIC EMERGENCIES**

*Gregory A Baldwin (ed)*  
*Little, Brown, Boston (1989)*  
561 pages. Price £19.95

Real childhood emergencies are rare in general practice, but they are a frightening test of our paediatric skills when they occur. Perhaps that is a good reason for possessing a concise and up-to-date handbook to consult should the need arise. However, I doubt if this is the book — it is largely hospital oriented and much of the content is not relevant in the general practice setting. However, there are many sections of general interest and the pages are packed with useful information. It is well indexed and abounds with lists, flow charts and reference tables. And while it is necessarily didactic each section has an up-to-date bibliography. In the reference section on blood chemistry we are told to use red tubes, green tubes, or gray tubes — otherwise the North American terminology is generally familiar.

From my reading I have learnt about intraosseous infusions, and that the pain of bee stings can be helped with a topical antiperspirant. No doubt any reader would find something of interest within its pages, but on the whole the book belongs in the accident and emergency department.

JAMES CAMPBELL

*General practitioner, Livingston, West Lothian and hospital  
practitioner in accident and emergency medicine*

## **INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOSEXUAL MEDICINE**

**For doctors, nurses, students, and other health professionals**  
*R L Skrine (ed)*  
*Montana Press, Carlisle (1989)*  
211 pages. Price £10.95

If a woman patient innocently remarked, 'I would not have your job for anything', just as her doctor was about to perform a vaginal examination, then she may be in need of psychosexual counselling. If you accept this concept then *Introduction to psychosexual medicine* will be of service as it is predominantly

Freudian in content. It discusses how a general practitioner can be aware of patients' hidden sexual problems during routine consultations. It certainly cannot be regarded as a good reference book for non-Freudians.

The field of psychosexual counselling is highly specialized, and any attempt to teach it to a wider audience should be met with caution. As such, it is doubtful whether this book will be of value to all doctors, nurses, students, and other health professionals as is suggested by its subtitle. It should be placed beside volumes that express alternative points of view in psychosexual medicine.

P S McDONALD

*Psychologist, Department of General Practice,  
University of Nottingham*

## PALLIATIVE CARE OF THE TERMINALLY ILL

J F Hanratty

*Radcliffe Medical Press, Oxford (1989)*

96 pages. Price £5.95

Written by a doctor with 10 years' experience of running a hospice this excellent little book is full of concise and beautiful insights. The first 26 pages deal entirely with the philosophy of terminal care, giving this most difficult part of caring the priority and importance it deserves. The author's warm and humane text is illustrated by frequent quotations from the dead and buried, notably from Newman's text of the *Dream of Gerontius* which should of course be essential listening for trainees, preferably with Elgar's orchestration.

The second part of the book covers the control of distressing symptoms and the book emphasizes the need for medical competence as well as for compassion in looking after the dying patient. This section is well laid out, comprehensive and authoritative.

What is unusual for a 'hospice production' is how closely attuned the author is to the home situation and how he stresses the importance of trying to keep the patient at home and of looking after the caring relatives. This book is essential for the practice library and the busy family doctor.

PETER BARRITT

*General practitioner and tutor, Shrewsbury, Shropshire*

## COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY FOR PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS

**A practical guide**

*Keith Hawton, Paul M Salkovskis, Joan Kirk and  
David M Clark (eds)*

*Oxford University Press (1989)*

456 pages. Price £40.00 (h/b), £15.00 (p/b)

I find it difficult to describe the cognitive approach to emotional and psychological problems without producing statements that appear banal and obvious. The essential elements are that people's habitual ways of making sense of themselves and of the world around them may be dysfunctional and may produce distorted thinking and behaviours. The focus of attention in behaviour therapy is on the present state — where the person is now rather than how he or she got there — and on how he or she can be helped to change it. Developing understanding of the reasons for the problem proceeds simultaneously with learning and practising new behaviour. It is always interesting, and sometimes necessary to discover the origins of present patterns of behaviour but in cognitive behaviour therapy this is subsidiary to the task of creating new modes of thinking and new ways of behaving.

This book is an instruction manual for therapists who seek to apply cognitive and behavioural approaches to people with a wide variety of psychiatric disorders. It is therefore a highly structured text with many examples of individual cases and of therapists' responses to clinical problems.

There is a risk that the cognitive approach may become the psychiatric equivalent of the philosopher's stone and it is good, therefore, that the authors state frankly that there is little evidence that this treatment produces better results than other treatments. General practitioners will find the historical review at the beginning, the chapter on somatizing patients and the final chapter on problem solving useful. They will also pick up useful tips on how to phrase responses to patient's statements and how to deal with setbacks, and gain a sense of the value of a structured approach to problems.

P M HIGGINS

*Retired professor of general practice, Guy's Hospital, London*

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

### THE LISA SAINSBURY FOUNDATION

**Residential Workshop (2 Nights)**

### 'TERMINAL CARE IN THE COMMUNITY'

Either — Wednesday 16th to Friday 18th May, 1990  
Or — Wednesday 19th to Friday 21st September 1990

**Venue: Holland House, Crothorne, Pershore, Worcester**

Family practitioners are invited to join a group looking at terminal care in the community. The major issues to be covered are talking with the dying patient and family, concepts of loss and pain relief and symptom control. This workshop is designed so that considerable benefit can be gained if a general practitioner is accompanied by a community nurse from the same practice.

Section 63, zero-rated, is being sought. Fee: £30.00

Details and application form from: **Sandra Fast, The Lisa Sainsbury Foundation, 8-10 Crown Hill, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 1RY.**  
Tel: 01 686 8808

### WELSH MRCGP COURSE AT ABERYSTWYTH, DYFED

**Tuesday 3rd April 1990 to Saturday 7th April 1990**

The above Course has been instigated by a decision of the Welsh Council of the RCGP and will be a residential course in buildings of the University College of Wales where opportunity will be offered for individual and group work in preparation for MCQ, MEQ and vivas of the MRCGP examination. Examiners of the College will be present. Pre-course work will be required and Section 2 approval has been sought.

The cost of the Course is £230 payable at the start of the Course, and a deposit of £50 will be required on confirmation of being offered a place on the Course.

Please apply to **Mrs. Rita Slade, Postgraduate Centre, Bronglais General Hospital, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, SY23 1ER.**