



HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND SECURITY
The creation of the National Health Service

Frank Honigsbaum
Routledge, London (1989)
286 pages. Price £35.00

Health, happiness and security describes in detail the ideas and events which led to the founding of the National Health Service in 1948. The author intends that the part played by civil servants should form the central thread of a narrative which begins in 1911. But, seen through the eyes of a doctor, this is an account of the medical profession's movement towards the same goal of a comprehensive service and the struggles which this movement entailed — struggles to avoid the control, in turn, of the friendly societies, the approved societies, local authorities and finally, but with less determination, the Department of Health. Almost hidden within this movement towards the major goal was another of comparable importance — to enlarge and develop a specialist service which would take over the extensive work done by general practitioners in hospitals and establish for specialists a commanding role in medical care. This proved to be a crucial step in the division of British medicine into primary and secondary care, which is now the most distinctive feature of our system. In both movements the figure of Charles Wilson, Lord Moran, looms large.

This book appears at a time when an upheaval comparable to that of 1945–48 is taking place in the health service. Was this the reason for writing the book? The evidence suggests rather that the reason was the recent availability of crucial documents. In addition, it would have been impossible to write in such detail, with such careful referencing and so little bias without long preparation. Indeed the author's interest goes back 30 years. This is historical writing, not journalism — and it is not for the casual reader.

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HEALTH PROMOTION IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

An open learning package for practice nurses
English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting, London (1989)
Price £20.00

Health promotion in primary health care, a new distance learning package, is the first publication to result from the funds allocated by the government to promote training for practice nurses. A working group was formed to produce the package and among the groups represented are the General Medical Services Committee, the British Medical Association of the Royal College of General Practitioners and the English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting professional advisers with the expertise of the learning materials design team.

This first pack consists of three handbooks, a cassette and videotape on the topic of cervical screening. The module on

health promotion in general gives a full description and is illustrated by examples from day to day work, for example, the use of age–sex registers and the importance of communication skills in the surgery and of teamwork.

The second part of the pack focuses on cervical screening and I particularly liked the emphasis on the patients' view of the need for privacy. The detailed explanation of how to take a cervical smear is useful for both medical students and practice nurses. The videotape emphasizes the management aspects of a screening programme and the need to include other screening procedures at the same time.

With the rapid increase in newly recruited practice nurses and their developing role in health promotion, this package is an excellent tool to complement their skills. Indeed, as the whole primary health care team becomes more involved in health promotion, the flexibility of the package enables group or individual study.

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COPING WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

A guide to what it is and what can be done to help
Jacqueline M. Atkinson
Thorsons, Wellingborough (1989)
144 pages. Price £4.99

It is clear from this revised edition of *Coping with schizophrenia*, first published in 1985, that the author has extensive practical as well as theoretical knowledge of her subject.

For those without the time, or inclination, to read the whole book individual chapters deal with specific issues but indicate which other chapters would give further information. The book list provides guidance on an interesting range of literature, both fictional and non-fictional, and the index is brief but adequate.

The definitions of symptoms might be difficult for a lay person to comprehend on first reading but are clear and provide an essential basis for later understanding. The book deals with problems in a straightforward and unpatronizing manner. Although doctors are criticized the overall view is balanced and the emphasis is on how to get the best out of the patient, carers, and professionals. There is also a good explanation of the range of community care.

Some additions could usefully be made to the table of common neuroleptic drugs and some of the recommended doses were considerably lower than those listed by manufacturers. However, these are minor points and I would happily recommend this book to my patients and their relatives. For the busy general practitioner the book provides a good source of answers to the questions patients and their relatives will, quite rightly, ask about schizophrenia.

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