

earlier editions. There are many tables, illustrations, and information boxes, highlighting key points, which are a useful innovation.

For younger medical students this very traditional book is competent but unexciting; for general practitioners this would not be a useful addition to the practice library.

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### SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN

Riley D (ed) (translated from the original by Jacqueline Rutgers)  
Radcliffe Medical Press, Oxford (1991)  
82 pages. Price £8.50

*Sexual abuse of children* originated in Zurich but has been successfully translated and adapted for a British readership; a poignant reminder that the sexual abuse of children is cross-cultural and international.

News items continue to remind us of the occurrence of child sexual abuse, but dispassionate yet authoritative accounts are not readily available. However, this book, aimed at a general readership yet highly relevant to general practitioners, is such a source. It can be read in an hour, but includes a substantial, annotated list of books, videos, leaflets, and helping agencies, which allow a reader to follow up a particular aspect. A unique feature is the series of 13 cartoons which illustrate, in a way words could not, some of the emotional trauma felt by an abused child, and some of the helpful responses.

By stepping back from the detail of cases and surveys, the author has been able to create a coherent and sensitive account of child sexual abuse, in chapters covering definitions and incidence, the nature and results of trauma, secrecy, recognition and primary intervention, subsequent investigations (without going into detail), and prevention.

The introduction states that this book is aimed at 'anyone who comes into contact with children and undertakes responsibility for them'. I agree and regard it as especially useful for general practitioners, school doctors, health visitors and practice nurses.

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### BREAST CANCER

Lesley Fallowfield with Andrew Clark  
Routledge, London (1991)  
135 pages. Price £20.00

Over the last few years there have been many volumes published on cancer and terminal illness and it is refreshing to read one that makes a concerted effort to be balanced in its outlook and to avoid the all too common trap of inappropriate sentimentality. *Breast cancer* is a relatively small volume, clearly printed on non-reflective paper. However, its brevity is deceptive. The text is concentrated, with many references and thought-provoking statements. Of particular value are the sections gently exploring accepted dogma: reminding the reader that distress to partner and family is all too often underestimated; re-examining the causes of anxiety in patients with breast cancer; looking at the effect of the phenomenon of recurrence; and finally dealing with the role of the counsellor.

The description of a patient's perception of radiotherapy and chemotherapy are essential reading for any practitioner. The potential for professional counselling input at all stages of the process from diagnosis, through treatment to death is usefully explored. However, I would have liked to have seen the need for

professionally trained counsellors, properly supervised and supported, even more firmly emphasized.

This book provides thought-provoking reading for the health care professional, and a plethora of references to help those who wish to gain a deeper insight into the field.

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### EPILEPSY: TOWARDS TOMORROW

J Griffin and M Wyles  
Office of Health Economics, London (1991)  
68 pages. Price £3.00

One must welcome any publication on epilepsy as this is a much neglected subject. However, this particular publication has a number of flaws. First, the anticipated audience and aims of this booklet are unclear. Secondly, it is unbalanced; it quotes impressive references directly from reputable medical journals and textbooks but then references the less scientifically rigorous medical press or the lay press. Thirdly, it is wordy: the same information could have been delivered in half of the text. Finally, it provides some incorrect information. For example, the annual cost of vigabatrin per patient is higher than the £168 per year it quotes, as a cursory glance at the *British national formulary* will show.

However, it provides an extensive list of references, and gives the first published estimate of the cost of epilepsy to the National Health Service, and consequently to society, and this is in itself extremely interesting.

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**RCGP**

Scottish  
Council



## PALLIATIVE CARE

The Royal College of General  
Practitioners (Scottish Council) and  
Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund

## FACILITATORS PROJECT

In addition to the national project already advertised, the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund are providing a grant to Scottish Council for the establishment of a uniquely Scottish Palliative Care Facilitator post. This additional grant has been made possible owing to generous support from the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund and the Scottish Office Home and Health Department. The project seeks to enhance the continuity and quality of care for the person with an advanced disease and their families by providing an experienced general practitioner to work as a Facilitator with primary care teams to help mobilize existing professional skills.

The grant provides the Faculty chosen with sufficient funding to allow the Facilitator to devote up to 40 days (80 sessions) per annum for two years to the project, plus an allowance to cover travelling expenses, secretarial and administrative costs, and the costs of setting up study days, seminars and tutorials.

All Faculties of the College in Scotland are being given the opportunity to administer the project in their area. The project is scheduled for commencement in January 1992. Members or Fellows of the College with a special interest in palliative care who would be interested in participating in the project, should contact their local Faculty Honorary Secretary in the first instance. Further information and details about the project are available from Dr K Donaldson, Honorary Secretary, Scottish Council, RCGP, 2 Hill Square, Edinburgh EH8 9DR. Closing date for applications: 31 October 1991.