

questions and answers are followed by one or two paragraphs of discussion and a description of the current state of knowledge or developing opinion in this area. This user-friendly and sympathetic approach is extended in the chapter on ethical issues where some case studies are included and discussion points highlighted. These topical and stimulating vignettes are something that will be useful for people involved in teaching or in postgraduate education.

The book is easy to read without complicated, unnecessarily scientific, detail but the only negative consequence is (as always with AIDS) the limitation of knowledge in certain key areas. There is the possibility that much of the understanding in the virology sections and epidemiology sections will be superseded within the next few years, and it may be necessary to update this book more regularly than most. It is good to see an updated explanation of the redundancy of some terms such as 'AIDS related complex'. However, it is obvious that the 1993 revision of the case definition of AIDS, to include invasive cervical neoplasia and recurrent bacterial chest infections as AIDS-defining illness, arrived since the drafting of the book. It is good to see a section on paediatric AIDS, HIV infection in women, and HIV and the injecting drug user, although there is little on the devastating social and domestic conditions that patients find themselves in, in the advanced or even approaching the advanced stage of HIV infection. Some of the scenarios involving drug users give a slightly unrealistic understanding of the reality of the lives of those people involved with drugs and the sex industry.

Altogether this is a stimulating and presentable book which would be useful for undergraduates, postgraduates and all those involved with HIV infection. It is a useful addition to any practice library and useful as a teaching source.

J ROY ROBERTSON

General practitioner, Muirhouse, Edinburgh

JUST A GP: a biography of Professor Sir Michael Drury

Robin Hull

Radcliffe Medical Press, Oxford (1994)

144 pages. Price £14.95

This is a narrative account of some aspects and achievements of a great man, as seen by a friend and colleague who has himself played a part in helping to shape general practice in the latter half of this century.

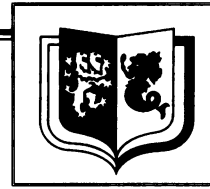
Against a wide canvas of political, academic and service pressures influencing patient care, the author depicts his subject as doctor, academic and, above all, as a man of great humour and humanity. The style is informal and the account is loaded with quotations from patients, friends and colleagues. Also included are a family tree and an entertaining account of the Drury heraldic memorial, together with an index.

Often amusing, sometimes irreverent, the book made entertaining reading, despite the inevitable bittiness associated with compressing into 144 pages the eventful life and times of the subject.

Robin Hull succeeds in capturing the flavour of the exciting times through which British general practice passed prior to the doldrums in which it currently finds itself. Although this is a book which those personally acquainted with Michael Drury will enjoy, it is also the sort of book a caring trainer might give to his or her trainee, and it should find a place in departmental libraries of university departments of general practice.

JAMES D E KNOX

Emeritus professor of general practice, University of Dundee



THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

GPs in Purchasing - Taking the Plunge Wednesday 1 June in London

This conference will review different attitudes to involving GPs in commissioning. It is aimed at DHA and FHSA managers and GPs. Speakers include Prof Richard Hobbs, Department of General Practice, University of Birmingham, Ian Carruthers, Chief Executive of Dorset Health Commission, Dr David Colin-Thome from Runcorn and Dr Fay Wilson from Birmingham.

Conference Fee £125

Effective Purchasing Monday 27 June, Monday 11- Wednesday 13 July in Birmingham

A course for those involved in purchasing, with a diagnostic day followed by a 3 day module. The course is practically oriented to help purchasing decision makers in clarifying problems and discussing potential solutions. Participants are welcome from Health Commissions, DHAs, FHSAs, GP Fundholders and GP Purchasing Consortia.

Course Fee £450

Further details of these events and others are available from the Health Services Management Centre, Park House, 40 Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham, B15 2RT
Tel: 021 414 7050 Fax: 021 414 7051