

interesting 'captain's log' of the researcher's work. As a text on which to base the detection of problem drinkers, it leaves much to be desired, concentrating as it does almost entirely on the methodology adopted by the researcher. The format adopted in the book is not at all readable, and leads to a considerable duplication of information in each chapter (for example, background data on alcohol consumption in the Netherlands in each introductory section). The reproduction of the papers in their original format, complete with summary and keywords makes it clear that the author did not set out to write a book related to the detection of problem drinkers in general practice and has made little effort to tackle the subject comprehensively. The only point where the whole subject is addressed is in the final chapter which includes a discussion and conclusions. These too are rather disjointed and repeat much of what has been covered in previous chapters.

The author is to be congratulated on his work, and it is to be hoped that the three out of five papers as yet unpublished eventually find their way into appropriate journals. However, those readers wishing to find out about the detection of problem drinkers in general practice would be advised to read a more general text.

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BUSINESS AND HEALTH PLANNING FOR GENERAL PRACTICE

*Peter Edward, Stephen Jones and Stephanie Williams
Radcliffe Medical Press, Oxford (1994)
231 pages. Price £13.50*

The writing is on the wall — those of us who muddle along from day to day will be overwhelmed by the complexity of our developing practices. The future of general practice depends on sound management.

The fear of change has been one of the most destructive effects of the new general practitioner contract. This book describes how change can be harnessed and used to advantage. Practitioners should be in control of their practices. Planning and information enable that control to be achieved.

This book is not written for bedtime reading or relaxation. It contains, in concentrated form, essential ingredients for practice management. The outdated reactive responses traditionally used by general practitioners are challenged and, by the application of simple and fundamental logic, the book guides us in the proactive management of our practices. The authors share with us the cumulation of their learning, application and experience. This is valuable to all general practitioners who are extending their commitment beyond their immediate clinical horizons, and to those who have already embarked on that voyage. Even the experienced practitioner or practice manager, accustomed to management principles, will find this book valuable for reference. The comprehensive approach, checklists and examples cover a wide variety of areas, from health planning to setting standards, from SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to fundholding. Skills new to general practice, such as negotiating, being interviewed by the media, and submitting a business plan, are covered.

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C W G ANGUS

General practitioner, Rosyth, Fife

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