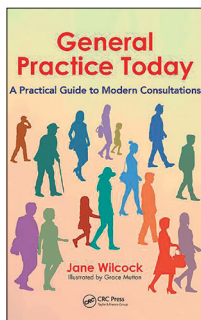


General Practice Today: A Practical Guide to Modern Consultations

Jane Wilcock

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SETTING GOOD EXAMPLES

None of us can escape the changes in the role of the GP that have come with the internet, the shift in society's expectations, and increasing workload. How then to stay resilient and adaptable? Tending to our own performance is surely an important part, and this book makes a credible claim to ease the process of 'slipping into the coat' of your professional skills.

The book is focused on how to maintain the knowledge and skills that enable effective consultations, rather than any particular consultation model. This is likely to be of particular benefit to GP trainees, covering as it does so much of the content assessed in the Clinical Skills Assessment of the membership examinations. Often viewed by trainees as 'boring but important', literature on consultation skills needs to have something about it that grabs the reader. Here it is the strength of the example cases that illustrate every subsection. Not only are these realistic, but they also tend to test the boundaries of the principles that have been discussed, answering the nagging 'ah, but what if ...' type of question that often comes to mind when a principle sounds too inflexible.

The excellent use of case studies continues right into a section on statistics. By explaining the utility and limitations of Ca-125 and PSA by way of statistical measures, the chapter comes as close to being readable as any I've come across on statistics.

Those who have been practising longer will recognise well the issues raised in some interesting passing commentary

on the causes and effects of diminishing continuity of care and the impact of 'giving away' some of our consultations, as we collaborate more with other healthcare practitioners. Unfortunately, with these particular issues the problems are much easier to describe than the solutions.

However, practical advice is certainly forthcoming in most of the book, such as a handy list of links to the best sources of information and risk calculators that GPs would do well to have on their desktop.

To be as truly 'modern' as the title implies, the next edition must surely include more about technology, such as the increasing use of email and video consultations. Most of our skills and principles are timeless. However, with QOF under review in England and new risk calculators emerging all the time, for maximum relevance I'd recommend reading this book sooner rather than later!

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