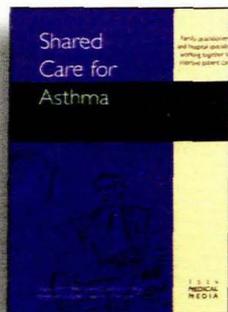




BOOKS

SHARED CARE FOR ASTHMA

By Mark Levy, Jon Couriel, Roland Clark, Stephen Holgate, & Anoop Chauhan. Pp. x + 219. Illustrated. R340. ISIS Medical Media. 1997. ISBN 1-899066-41-1.



There are many role-players across the health scene involved with the care of asthmatics – GPs, general physicians and paediatricians, respiratory specialists, practice and clinic nurses, and emergency unit doctors. The aim of this book is to improve asthma care by helping all these different players to understand their particular role, and to link in with their other colleagues. Its

strengths are its readability and useful practical advice, and its weaknesses its length (219 pages), some repetitiveness, and (for a South African reader) its UK bias in outlining health resources and the interfaces between levels of care.

The chapter on pathogenesis is rather too complex and long for its target reader, but the chapters on diagnosis and management are excellent. I would perhaps have drawn more attention to the importance of diurnal and day to day variability of symptoms in the diagnosis of asthma, and the fact that allergens play an important role, not only in paediatric asthma, but adult disease as well. The authors very importantly highlight the crucial role of regular preventer anti-inflammatory treatment, and the use of metered-dose inhalers as the preferred route of administration (with spacers or the use of alternate inhaler devices in children and others with poor inhaler technique). Also good is their discussion of the side-effects of the various treatments, and their management; their review of the risk/benefit profile of inhaled steroids is accurate and balanced. They give helpful advice on the setting up of an asthma clinic in GP practice, or at least a treatment protocol to improve the care provided. The assessment of both long-term control and the severity of an acute attack are also particularly well addressed. They emphasise the need for accurate transfer of information about asthmatics in both directions between GPs and specialists and/or hospital doctors, and give useful examples of structured referral and discharge letters which busy practitioners can pre-print and use to give complete information with minimum effort. Finally, they end off with some illustrative case studies which highlight common problems in both diagnosis and treatment.

This book is recommended to those with an interest in asthma at all levels of health care, particularly the generalist. As is often the case, it would be of even more value to those not particularly interested! It brings together in one volume a

lot of practical information previously available only in larger more expensive texts, and is very well referenced for those wishing to read more deeply.

Gillian Ainslie

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8TH WORLD CONGRESS ON PAIN*

Progress in Pain Research and Management Volume 8. Edited by Troels S Jensen, Judith A Turner and Zsuzsanna Wiesenfeld-Hallin. Pp. xvi + 965. \$75. IASP Press. 1997. ISBN 0-931092-18-3.

Studies on pain mechanisms probably represent the greatest expansion of knowledge in contemporary medicine and yet many of the problems remain unsolved. This book is replete with reports of laboratory and clinical investigations but also includes observations on epidemiological and social aspects. Included are a wide spectrum of topics from which the reader can select those of most interest to himself.

The chapter recognising the contribution of Dr Bonica was most appropriate. The sections cover areas of pain management from the relatively straightforward clinical problems to very sophisticated research endeavours.

It would serve little purpose to analyse and comment on each chapter but anyone who has an interest in this complicated subject would find a surfeit of information. The book, therefore, would have appeal to anaesthetists, psychiatrists, neurologists, neurosurgeons, orthopaedic surgeons, psychologists, physiotherapists, social workers, surgeons in all disciplines as well as general practitioners, who often find the problems presented by patients with chronic pain problems particularly vexing.

The proceedings serve as a reference book which could be an

BEST SELLERS

The top three best selling books from the Multimedia Publishing Book Department in the last month were:

ABC of Work Related Disorders. Edited by David Snashall. R224. BMJ: 1997. ISBN 0-7279-1154-6.

Stedman's Concise Medical and Allied Health Dictionary. Third edition. Edited by John H Dirckx. R180. Williams and Wilkins: 1997. ISBN 0-683-23125-1.

Resuscitation of Babies at Birth. A Report of a Joint Working Party of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. R182. BMJ: 1997. ISBN 0-7279-1179-1.

* Book titles marked may be ordered directly from SA Medical Association Multimedia Publishing Book Department, Private Bag X1, Pinelands, 7430, tel. (021) 531-3081, fax (021) 531-4126, e-mail multimedia@samedical.co.za or jstrydom@samedical.co.za



important addition to libraries. In the South African context it would be expensive for individuals to purchase.

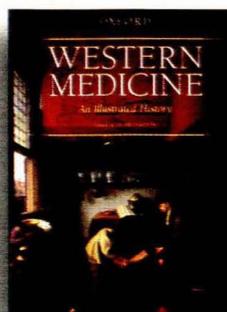
I suggest that medical schools and hospital libraries will be the major subscribers as it contains an enormous amount of factual data.

John F Viljoen

WESTERN MEDICINE AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY*

Edited by Irvine Loudon. Pp. xvi + 347. Illustrated. R282. Oxford University Press. 1997. ISBN 0-19-820509-0.

This is a welcome departure from the standard texts of medical history. In the preface, the editor indicates the changes that have occurred in medical history and historians since 1960. 'Before the 1960s it was largely concerned with the history of the "great men" of medicine, medical discoveries, and famous medical institutions. Now the emphasis has shifted towards the social history of medicine, with emphasis on the sick as well as their doctors, and on the health of populations.'



There are 19 essays on selected themes. Part I is chronological, ranging from the classical world to the present. Part II contains selected themes which are topical, such as medical education, the hospital, the geography of diseases, nurses, childbirth, children in hospital, the mind, the spread of Western medicine, unorthodox medicine, politics and finally the patient's view. The book justifies its title as 'An Illustrated History'. It is liberally and beautifully illustrated. Chapter 1 sets the scene with 'Medicine in View: Art and Visual Representation' by Martin Kemp, Professor of the History of Art at the University of Oxford. The other contributors are a mixed bag of professionals, including PhDs, social historians, a Reader in Ancient Philosophy and Science, a Master of Literature and several MDs. The editor, Irvine Loudon, abandoned general practice in 1970 to become a full-time medical historian. Despite the academic superiority of the contributors, the literary style in each chapter is lucid and easy to read. Lay readers and professionals, students and historians can both enjoy and learn from this book.

I unreservedly recommend this book. In view of the many

coloured and black and white illustrations, the clear print on glossy paper and the inferior value of the rand, the price of R282 is a bargain. The book will never lose its attraction for casual reading or for reference.

A Dubb

BOOKS RECEIVED

The receipt of these books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits. The SAMJ does not publish unsolicited reviews.

Hazards of Local Anaesthetic Injections.* Revised First Edition. By Daniel P Barnard. Pp. vi + 150. Illustrated. R85. DP Barnard. 1998. ISBN 0-620-18666-6.

Structural Abnormalities and Reproductive Failure.* By Gerard S Letterie. Pp. xiii + 514. Illustrated. £95. Blackwell Science. 1998. ISBN 0-86542-434-9.

Guidelines for Controlling and Monitoring the Tobacco Epidemic.* Pp. x + 190. SwFr65/US\$58.50. WHO. 1998. ISBN 92-4-1545078-9.

Kinderoncologie. Edited by P A Voute, J de Kraker and H N Caron. Pp. xviii + 362. Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum. 1997. ISBN 90-313-2198-2.

Community Health. Second edition. Edited by C H Wood, H de Glanville and J P Vaughan. Pp. xiv + 472. Illustrated. African Medical and Research Foundation. 1997. ISBN 9966-874-14-3.

WHO Expert Committee on Biological Standardization. Forty-sixth Report.* Technical Report Series No. 872. Pp. vi + 90. SwFr20/US\$18. WHO. 1998. ISBN 92-4-120872-4.

WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence. Thirtieth Report.* Technical Report Series No. 873. Pp. vi + 50. SwFr14/US\$12.60. WHO. 1998. ISBN 92-4-120873-2.

WHO Expert Committee on Leprosy. Seventh Report.* Technical Report Series No. 874. Pp. vi + 43. SwFr14/US\$12.60. WHO. 1998. ISBN 92-4-120874-0.

Training in Diagnostic Ultrasound: Essentials, Principles and Standards.* Report of a WHO Study Group. Technical Report Series No. 875. Pp. vi + 47. SwFr14/US\$12.60. WHO. 1998. ISBN 92-4-120875-9.

Cardiovascular Disease and Steroid Hormone Contraception.* Report of a WHO Scientific Group. Technical Report Series No. 877. Pp. vii + 89. SwFr20/US\$18. WHO. 1998. ISBN 92-4-120877-5.

Molecular and Cell Biology of Type 2 Diabetes and its Complications. Frontiers in Diabetes Vol. 14. Edited by F Belfiore, M Lorenzi, G M Molinatti and M Porta. Series Editor: F Belfiore. Pp. x + 260. SwFr112/DM 134/US\$97.50. Karger. 1998. ISBN 3-8055-6644-1.



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