

Books

How to Investigate Drug Use in Health Facilities. Selected Drug Use Indicators

WHO: DAP/93.1. Pp. 87. Sw.Fr.16/US\$14,40. Geneva: WHO. 1993.

Drug abuse by health workers in the form of inappropriate and wasteful prescribing habits has long been a subject of concern to the WHO. Many countries, particularly the poorer ones, have successfully implemented its recommendations for auditing and supervising prescribing habits at all levels of their health services by the introduction of National Essential Drug Programmes.

This short WHO manual outlines methods for evaluating drug use indicators in health facilities. The broad areas of study include the description of current treatment practices, comparison of performance of different facilities or prescribers, periodic monitoring and supervision of specific drug use and assessing the impact interventions.

The methodology, which has been widely tested in countries including Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria and Malawi, is described in simple terms and the statistical basis for the sampling methods suggested is described elsewhere. Analysis of results may be performed manually, and the method is simply explained, or with the aid of a computer when available.

Some examples given from drug use investigation in these countries report that health centres in Indonesia prescribed an average of 3,3 drugs per consultation, that 44% of drugs prescribed in health units in Nepal are prescribed by generic name and that in dispensaries in Tanzania 88% of drugs prescribed appear on the National Essential Drug List.

In the area of patient care indicators, we read that Malawian patients spend an average of 2,3 minutes in consultation with the health worker, and that in Tanzanian health centres an average of 78 seconds per patient is spent in dispensing and advising on the drug use. In one unnamed place only 10,2% of drugs dispensed were adequately labelled.

Two studies are mentioned which reported on the effects of interventions. In the Yemen a reduction was reported in the number of drugs, percentage of antibiotics and percentage of injections given. A Ugandan study demonstrated a decline in the use of injections and antidiarrhoeal drug use and an increase in use of oral rehydration fluids.

The final chapter discusses the questions raised by the results of these preliminary investigations into drug use in health facilities and further studies must inevitably be generated to explain differing patterns of drug use and suggest appropriate interventions where indicated. This manual simply describes important small scale studies on drug use indicators and is a valuable contribution to all who want to implement rational prescribing as part of a National Essential Drug Programme.

Jan Topley

Introductory Textbook of Psychiatry

By Nancy C. Andreasen & Donald W. Black. Pp. vii + 509. R175,00. Washington: American Psychiatric Press, Inc. 1991. ISBN 0-88048-114-5.

This book is an introductory textbook aimed at undergraduates, postgraduates with an interest in psychiatry, and those in the early part of specialist training. It is well written and easy to follow. The style is informative with sufficient explanation of psychiatric principles and one of the features is the use of case studies to exemplify clinical issues.

The layout is clear. Chapters 2 and 3 on diagnosis, classification, interviewing and assessment are excellent. This section is well formatted and includes adequate discussion of different symptom categories using the DSM (Diagnostic Statistical Manual) as a base. The definition of common signs and symptoms and methods used to elicit them is well described and should help the student when taking a psychiatric history.

The chapters on the major psychiatric disorders are comprehensive and well laid out. The discussion frequently goes beyond the standard criteria as set out in the DSMIII-R, such as introducing the concept of masking on the chapter of depression. The addition of information on epidemiology, aetiology and differential diagnosis and clinical management are useful and afford one a better understanding of the disorder at hand.

The section on treatment is good and follows a biopsychosocial model. A major drawback is that it refers to the now out of date DSMIII-R criteria. A minor criticism is the chapter on child and adolescent psychiatry, which is short on information, particularly when dealing with adolescence.

Should a revised edition incorporate the DSMIV criteria, I would have no hesitation in recommending this book as the standard text for undergraduate medical students. It is certainly equal to its current peers as an introductory text with an easy and informative style.

R. M. F. Berard

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.

Essentials of the Orthopaedic Examination. By Alan Hammer. Pp. viii + 111. Illustrated. London: Edward Arnold. 1995. ISBN 0-340-61382-3.

Drug Surveillance: International Cooperation Past, Present and Future. Proceedings of the XXVIIth CIOMS Conference. Ed. by Z. Bankowski and J. F. Dunne. Pp. vii + 198. Sw.fr.25/US\$22,50. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-9036-059-3.

Introduction to Toxicology. (2nd Edition). By J. A. Timbrell. Pp. ix + 159. Hampshire: Taylor & Francis. 1995. ISBN 0-7484-0241-1.

Management for Doctors. Ed. by Jenny Simpson and Richard Smith. Pp. 170. £15,00. London: BMJ Publishers. 1995. ISBN 0-7279-0858-8.

Cancer Prevention in Primary Care. By Joan Austoker. Pp. viii + 173. £15,00. London: BMJ Publishers. 1995. ISBN 0-7279-0825-1.

Cardiological Dilemmas. By Roger Blackwood and Bev Daily. Pp. viii + 83. Buckinghamshire: Beaconsfield Publishers Ltd. 1995. ISBN 0-906584-40-X.

Oxford Medical Companion. Ed. by John Walton, Jeremiah A. Barondess and Stephen Lock. Pp. xvii + 1012. Illustrated. R289,99. Cape Town: Oxford University Press - Southern Africa. 1995. ISBN 0-19-262355-9.

WHO Expert Committee on Biological Standardization. Forty-fourth Report. WHO Technical Report Series No. 848. Pp. vi + 88. Sw.fr.14/US\$12,60. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-4-120848-1.

Glyphosate. Environmental Health Criteria No. 159. WHO. Pp. 177. Sw.fr.27/US\$24,30. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-4-157159-4.

Brominated Diphenyl Ethers. Environmental Health Criteria No. 162. WHO. Pp. 347. Sw.fr.47/US\$42,30. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-4-157162-4.

Chloroform. Environmental Health Criteria No. 163. WHO. Pp. 174. Sw.fr.27/US\$24,30. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-4-157163-2.

Assessing Human Health Risks of Chemicals: Derivation of Guidance Values for Health-based Exposure Limits. Environmental Health Criteria No. 170. WHO. Pp. 73. Sw.fr.16/US\$14,40. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-4-157170-5.

Managing Tourism Services. Ed. by J. A. Bennett. Pp. 444. Illustrated. R149,95. Pretoria: JL van Schaik (Pty) Ltd. 1995. ISBN 0-627-01939-0.

Maintenance and Repair of Laboratory, Diagnostic Imaging, and Hospital Equipment. WHO. Pp. vi + 158. Illustrated. Sw.fr.39/US\$35,10. Geneva: WHO. 1994. ISBN 92-4-154463-5.