

Ear Nose and Throat Diseases with Head and Neck Surgery

Hans Behrbohm, Oliver Kaschke, Tadeus Nawka, Andrew Swift
Thieme 2009

Price \$69.95. Pp 461
ISBN 9783136712030

There are several good quality basic undergraduate ear, nose and throat texts and a few comprehensive reference texts for senior postgraduate students and candidates for UK and North American 'exit' specialty examinations. So far, there is little to cover the needs of students between these levels. I am thinking of 'early years' trainees who need a good grounding in basic principles and will not yet have the range of clinical experience needed to focus on the details of operative techniques, but who may be limbering up for searching examinations such as the UK Diploma in Otolaryngology

Head and Neck Surgery, or for postgraduate examinations in most European countries.

This beautifully presented book offers enough information in a didactic yet balanced format to satisfy most of the revision needs of this group. The layout is superb, the softback format handles nicely and the illustrations are clear, well labelled and easy to follow. I liked the division of text into shortish 'bite-size' segments.

Each chapter starts with an introductory section on applied basic science with just the right amount of detail and only the salient clinical points emphasized. Many 'nuggets of wisdom' are marked for easy revision in short passages of highlighted blue text and readers in the run-up to postgraduate examinations will find these



invaluable. This is not a manual of operative surgery but the authors have included enough detail to supplement the clinical experience and more detailed reading of more senior trainees who will also find these useful 'aide memoires'.

Given the significant 'pruning' of most surgical specialties that has taken place in British undergraduate medical school curricula over the last few years, this book is too detailed for any but the most diligent of undergraduates. Its main 'niche' will be the 'early years' trainee in European postgraduate programmes who will find it by far the best of the current crop that purports to cater for that market.

Ray Clarke, Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital, Liverpool

Communication Skills for Medicine (3rd edn)

Margaret Lloyd, Robert Bor
Churchill Livingstone Elsevier 2009
Price £29.99. Pp 222

ISBN 978 0 7020 3058 1

Effective communication is required in any job, but is vital in medical practice as it leads to improved patient care and a reduction in clinical errors. Communication skills are difficult to teach, there are certainly no formulae or short-cuts and each patient presents new challenges. This book would have saved me a lot of time as an adjunct to my studies as a medical student. It consists of 200 pages of concise and important information regarding communication skills in medical practice.

The book begins with a practical guide to basic communication skills and history taking. These chapters will be an excellent aid to both junior doctors and clinical facilitators as they teach medical students to develop their histories. It then moves on to tackle more delicate situations such as breaking bad news, sexual history and discussions with children. There are emotive quotations and the inclusion of data from studies to emphasize problems with communication, which certainly helps to put the importance of communication into perspective. There is good use of diagrams, albeit greyscale and highlighting of important information with shaded boxes. These

will be very useful when it comes to quick scanning of the book or revision. The difficult topics, such as breaking bad news, are explained clearly and concisely. There is little repetition between chapters and the authors give useful examples to put into practice during consultations in order to aid easier communication during such difficult scenarios. At the back of the book, there are exercises for teachers to use and appendices include guidelines on assessment and giving feedback. This is particularly useful if teachers are preparing their students for objective structured clinical examinations.

Not only is this a definite read for any medical undergraduate, but I would recommend it to those who teach communication skills to medical students on a regular basis... surely that would be every doctor.
Helen Fenwick, Nottingham City Hospital, Nottingham

Training in Paediatrics: The Essential Curriculum

Edited by Mark Gardiner, Sarah Eisen, Catherine Murphy

Oxford University Press 2009

Price £49.95. Pp 469

ISBN 978 0 19 922773 0

This is a book which does what it says on the cover, i.e. covers all the level one paediatric curriculum competencies. It is crammed full of detail with only the occasional minor omission. Any trainee who

reads this book in depth will have the knowledge required to pass the Membership of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

It has a clear structure and is well laid out. The colour pictures and diagrams are especially helpful and will increase the popularity of this book compared to similar text-only paediatric handbooks. The case-based discussions at the end of each section are also most welcome.

Readers need to familiarize themselves with the layout of the book. All information is there but can be hard to find at times. More charts, diagrams and tables would have helped information to stand out. Very little information is repeated. There is no cross referencing but if a topic does not appear in a section then the accurate index will guide you to it, e.g. gastroschisis and colloid baby are not in the neonatal section but in the gastroenterology and dermatology sections respectively.

My only reservation about this book is the small size of the print. It is too large a book to be a handbook and as a textbook could have been bigger. However, the price of £49.95 makes it good value and affordable. Trainees often ask which textbook to buy for their membership examination and this book is an ideal core text for those working towards this.

Helen Goodyear, Postgraduate School of Paediatrics, West Midlands