

Assessment of Mental Capacity: A Practical Guide for Doctors and Lawyers (3rd edn)

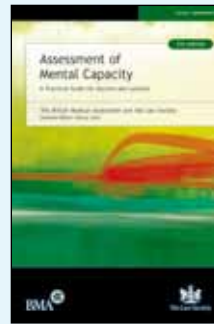
BMA and the Law Society
The Law Society 2009
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Much water has passed under the bridge since the 2nd edition of *Assessment of Mental Capacity* was published in 2004, notably the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the 2007 amendment to the 1983 Mental Health Act. The 3rd edition is now a 'practical guide for doctors and lawyers', a sign perhaps that implementing the Mental Capacity Act needs more than the simple 'guidance' of the 2nd edition.

Part I is an introduction which is preceded by tables of cases and statutes. There is a brief section on the interface with

mental health law, which is a source of confusion in the general hospital setting, particularly when restraint is involved. Part II sets out the legal principles behind the Mental Capacity Act, including the definition of capacity, the capacity test and the best interests 'checklist'. Part III explores the legal tests of capacity as they relate to financial affairs, wills, gifts, litigation, contracts, voting, relationships, criminal law and sexual offences, medical treatment, research and deprivation of liberty. Each section is practical and jargon-free, with illuminating caselaw wherever relevant.

Part IV gets down to the nitty-gritty of capacity assessment, with separate chapters offering practical guidelines for



doctors and lawyers. A systematic approach to assessing capacity is encouraged, including advice on how a patient's mental state may influence capacity, but relevant caselaw (e.g. 'Re C' [1994]) isn't mentioned. There is, however, a useful section on means the assessing doctor should use to 'enhance' capacity, an exhortation that all general hospital doctors would do well to follow. Various appendices round off the book.

This book reads well and it is definitely fit for purpose, but a book specific to the needs to doctors, with more emphasis on the interface with the Mental Health Act, would have been better.

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Color Atlas of ENT Diagnosis (5th edn)

Tony R Bull, John S Almeyda
Thieme 2009
Price \$49.95. Pp 275
ISBN 9783131293954

The *Color Atlas of ENT Diagnosis* provides 637 high gloss images presented over 275 pages, in an easy to handle 'pocket' sized book. This is the 5th edition of a well-established book that has been updated from the previous edition published 7 years ago. The preface emphasizes that this is a pictorial survey of ear, nose and throat (ENT) and not a textbook. However, each image is accompanied by legends that contain important nuggets of information and the accompanying text provides succinct descriptions with relevant detail of various commonly seen conditions.

The book aims to cover the whole specialty and starts with a chapter on aspects and techniques of clinical examination that includes pictorial examples of various investigations such as imaging, audiometry and the assessment of balance and smell. There are then four subsequent chapters that present conditions of the ear, nose, facial plastics, larynx and pharynx.

There is an extensive range of high-quality images from conditions that are likely to be seen in outpatients to the not-so-common and the rare. Several images are accompanied by clearly drawn annotated diagrams. The images are arranged in

a clear logical order grouped together by site that enables the reader to look at a series of disorders of, say, the external ear, tongue or vocal cords. Some of the images are from the original book and although quite dated, they have a certain historical appeal. Several pictures also demonstrate the use of the old established concave head mirror rather than the modern day preference for headlights or endoscopic cameras.

The book is aimed primarily at medical students but it will be a very helpful adjunct to the book collection of any post-graduate trainee who is likely to come across conditions of the head and neck, especially trainees in general practice. The book will also appeal to ENT nurses and ENT theatre staff.

To use this book effectively it needs to be browsed frequently for short periods rather than being read in prolonged sessions. It would be best placed so that it is readily available in the clinic, where pictures tell so much more than words.

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Dermatology in Clinical Practice

Z Zaidi, SW Lanigan
Springer 2010
Price £26.99. Pp 596
ISBN 978 1 84882 861 2

This book is aimed at GPs but is also stated to be suitable for medical students. The authors are from Pakistan and the

UK. The book is a handy size and nicely produced by the publishers.

This textbook follows a fairly conventional layout, with initial chapters on structure of the skin, immunity and diagnostic processes, followed by chapters on infections and the main diseases of the skin, and sections at the back on management.

The factual content is good although some recommendations differ a bit from the usual UK practice, e.g. methotrexate dosing and some aspects of skin cancer treatment. The biologics, a breaking area in the management of psoriasis and pemphigus, are mentioned only in passing. Most GPs will have patients taking these drugs and should know about their use and side effects.

Most of the common diseases are generously covered in a more than adequate manner for the target audience, but some coverage is of uncommon conditions that British GPs are unlikely ever to see. The chapter on bacterial infections is excellent. The authors use the term 'parapsoriasis' – a term best avoided.

Many of the figures, most of which are of Asian skin, are excellent but some are a little out of focus. Certain sections could do with more illustrations.

This is a well-written, handy book which can be delved into with ease. Its readers will be amply rewarded for their efforts.

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