

Patient Care and Professionalism

Edited by Catherine D DeAngelis

Oxford University Press 2014

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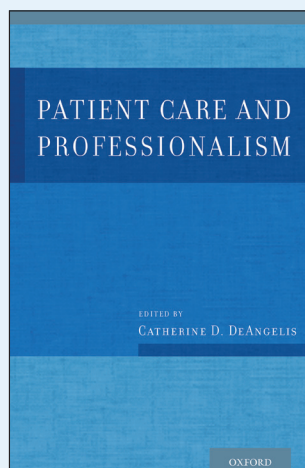
This book is unique in that it is written by a broad range of professionals exploring medical, nursing, public health, legal, religious, educational, health policy and patient perspectives, on patient care and professionalism.

It covers well-known areas of frontline 'clinical' professionalism but also addresses professionalism in those whose policies and laws are equally critical in shaping health-care provision and delivery.

The impact of government policies, politics, regulation, market forces and advances in medical care in shaping modern day professionalism in the delivery of

patient care is discussed. Given these considerations readers are reminded of the need for physicians to keep in mind the principles of the Hippocratic oath, which emphasize the central role that patients should occupy in care provision and delivery.

Professionalism in health-care delivery to whole populations is discussed, and contrasted with individual patient care. The impact of the major world religions and the laws governing health-care delivery, on issues like abortion and end of life matters, are explored. There is no denying that knowledge of such is crucial in enriching the professional approach to patients facing



such issues. Readers will appreciate how the integration of the science and art of medicine by professionalism makes it not only possible for the physician to make a diagnosis but also appreciate the impact of the diagnosis on the patient.

This book will engage all who have an interest in the provision and delivery of health care. Its multifaceted approach to professionalism provides some insight into how professionals across the board could improve the provision and delivery of patient care.

Umo Esen, South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust, South Shields

Tackling Health Anxiety: a CBT Handbook

Helen Tyrer

RCPsych Publications 2013

Price £18.00. Pp 150

ISBN 978 1 908020 90 1

Health anxiety remains a pervasive problem in the modern world, it being accepted that between 10 and 20% of all patients attending clinics in general hospitals have some degree of pathological health anxiety. This is a terrifying health burden, and as the author states, it creates 'enormous suffering and disability, and this often goes on for years in the absence of treatment'. Specialities particularly affected are neurology (1 in 4 patients), gastroenterology (is it bowel cancer or just irritable bowel syndrome?) and cardiology (that bugbear, 'palpitations').

Given the easy readability of this book, a mere 150 pages, with only two pages of references and a brief summary of each chapter, it should be on every physician's desk. There is practical advice about approaching patients, with tables and outlines of procedures, illustrative case examples everywhere, and a nice summary of specific techniques including how to clarify 'thinking errors'. The tendency to catastrophize, to superstitious thinking, to over-generalize and to make false links, as well as to ignore the positive or to have selective attention and memory will reflect many

clinicians' experiences of anxious patients. Encouraging patients to present early if they have symptoms, and screening programmes (e.g. for bowel cancer) tend to exacerbate these tendencies.

In essence, as the author emphasizes, the whole approach of cognitive behavioural therapy is 'learning to do things in a different, less threatening way', the stress being on the word 'learning'. Key to this management is not the suppression of intrusive and anxious thoughts, a common medical approach, but rather reinterpreting the symptoms or sensations patients are experienced. This is a book for all doctors, whatever their speciality, and should be there at hand (truly, a 'handbook'), just like the British National Formulary.

Trevor Turner, City & Hackney Centre for Mental Health, London

Clinical Skills (2nd edn)

Edited by TA Roper

Oxford University Press 2014

Price £34.99. Pp 576

ISBN 978 0 19 957492 6

History taking and physical examination are still the cornerstone of the patient contact, and are required for formulating a problem list, differential diagnosis, and (if necessary) investigations before reaching a diagnosis. Apart from guiding the diagnostic process (within the limits of accuracy), patients value the personal interac-

tion. In the last two decades there has been a cautiously renewed interest in the application and scientific validation of these processes, e.g. the work by Abraham Verghese in Stanford and the 'Rational Clinical Examination' series in *JAMA*.

This book addresses history and examination in good detail. In chapters organized by organ system, the authors elaborate on the symptoms and signs, often with discussions about the relevant anatomy and physiology. This is followed by dedicated chapters about the examination of the child, the interpretation of chest X-rays and a short chapter on exams.

The authors are sensible about the realities of finding particular signs. There are numerous high-quality drawings and photos, with occasional grainy photos of rare signs where better quality pictures were clearly not available. The text is practical and accessible, although the respelling of technical terms (electroencephalography is respelled elect-roe-en-kef-allo-graffy) might not be everyone's cup of tea.

This book will mainly serve medical students in their clinical years to help them perfect their skills in history taking and examination, but it could also serve as a basic text for revision for postgraduate exams, and clinical staff with teaching roles may find it useful when preparing tutorials. *Jacob F de Wolff, Northwick Park Hospital, Middlesex*