

Imaging Picture Tests for the MRCPCH

AP Winrow

Churchill Livingstone 2000

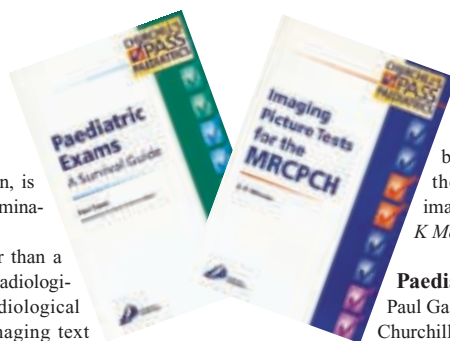
Price £19.95. Pp 205

ISBN 0 443 06445 8

This book, focusing on radiological interpretation, is designed as a revision aid for the MRCPCH examination. There are unfortunately many deficiencies.

The book is written by a paediatrician, rather than a radiologist, resulting in too few descriptions of radiological findings and no real exploration of the radiological principles or reasoning involved. While an imaging text from a paediatrician's perspective has a lot of merit, the lack of radiological input is a significant omission. The radiological terms used are often inaccurate, e.g. 'fluid level' when *fluid containing* or an *air-fluid level* is meant or 'echodensity' on a CT scan when *density* or *attenuation* would be correct. Thoracic CT studies without intravenous contrast enhancement are displayed which is poor imaging in the examples given. The layman's term 'dye' is too often used instead of contrast.

The type of MR examination, e.g. T1- or T2-weighted, is never mentioned; not only is this crucial in the interpretation but with the increasing use of MRI merits more detailed explanation. There is only one non-cerebral ultrasound study in the 100 cases and the diagrammatic representation of this is almost certainly incorrect. In an era where patient confidentiality is so important, it is worrying that many CT scans clearly show the hospital, date and time of study. Although a frequent problem with many texts, the plain radiographs are often poorly reproduced such that one is unable to identify the lesion allegedly demonstrated. A clearer description of the findings or repeating the images with arrows on the answers page would improve the learning potential considerably.



On a more positive note, many of the images are of good quality. Sensible examination tips are included for each answer. For the worried (or frantic!) paediatric trainee before the MRCPCH, this book may be worth a quick browse through, despite the flawed radiology, as it contains many classic images that should be recognized.

K McHugh, Great Ormond Street Hospital, London

Paediatric Exams: A Survival Guide

Paul Gaon

Churchill Livingstone 2000

Price £19.95. Pp 356

ISBN 0 4430 6272 2

A valuable perspective tool for the MRCPCH. The book covers a vast amount of examination paediatrics in its 340 pages. Aspects of the written and clinical exams are covered within the short summaries. With the inclusion of multiple option answers in the written examination, the punchy factual information within the book is timely and falls in a niche. I particularly liked the emphases on what to say and what not to forget to say during the clinical examination. These points are valuable for practising and crossing the divide to a 'consultant-like' performance on the day. Likely viva topics are clearly indicated. The brevity of sections should readily promote reflection of exam topics.

This book will advance candidates towards the MRCPCH, but by building and reinforcing foundation learning rather than being exhaustive in its content. In doing so it challenges existing knowledge in appropriate areas.

While covering a wide breadth of topics, in my experience frequent concerns for candidates also include basic statistics, evidence-based medicine and legal and political issues. Even without these areas, the book is a valuable resource.

Peter Smith, Institute of Child Health, London

Clinical Governance: one year on

Edited by Alastair D Scotland

Quay Books, Mark Allen Publishing Ltd 2000

Price £9.99. Pp 81

ISBN 1 85642 185 6

This handy concise collection sets out to demystify what has become one of the most banded phrases to arise from Labour's health care reforms of 1997. Clinical governance joins a long pedigree of opaque terms associated with the performance and accountability of health services: clinical audit, clinical guidelines, clinical effectiveness and now clinical governance. However, anyone with a couple of hours or so to spare will emerge enlightened from a perusal of this text. In clear and practitioner-oriented terms the reader is led through the constituent parts of clinical governance and some of the practical considerations involved in making it a reality.

Perhaps it is churlish to dwell on what is missing from an entry-level text that runs to just 81 pages. However, it seems only fair to note that this not a deep exploration of the organizational and human behavioural roots of quality performance in health care. Indeed one of the least satisfying aspects of many discussions of clinical governance (here and elsewhere) is their glib rhetoric on complex notions such as 'cultural change' and 'life-long learning' without much reference to the rich literature outside of health care on just these subjects. Thinking of this kind deprives health

care of much needed learning from elsewhere. Nonetheless the various contributors to this edited collection (of papers which have previously appeared in *Hospital Medicine*) do convey the integrative nature of clinical governance and provide a series of useful perspectives on its development in both primary and secondary care.

Huw TO Davies, University of St Andrews

Lee's Synopsis of Anaesthesia (12th edn)

Edited by GB Rushman, NJH Davies,

JN Cashman

Butterworth Heinemann 1999

Price £27.50. Pp 750

ISBN 0 7506 3247 X

The first edition of *Lee's Synopsis of Anaesthesia* was published in 1947. For 50 years it has been an essential handbook for the trainee preparing for professional examinations and as a companion in clinical practice. The 12th edition has undergone a complete revision of structure and text. The history of anaesthesia has been removed and published as a separate volume. Intensive care has been removed in favour of other published texts.

In the preface to the first edition J. Alfred Lee described the book as a summary of current teaching and practice. The present authors have remained true to Dr Lee's original vision. This edition is very much centred on practical anaesthesia, reflecting the authors' experience of the art and science of anaesthesia.

The book is divided into six sections, ward care, general anaesthesia techniques, the patient, anaesthesia for various surgical operations and situations, regional techniques and chronic pain. Each section is well presented and the addition of highlighted tables of key points is extremely useful. Suggested further reading appears after some sections but not others, reflecting the multi-author nature of this book. The authors state that the book is a reflection of their clinical practice and experience. This is highlighted by some omissions from individual sections, for example sub-tenons block in the anaesthesia for ophthalmic surgery section. Of particular use to the clinical anaesthetist is the dictionary of key points about rare diseases: important points relating to anaesthesia in patients with a particular condition and a reference are instantly available.

This new edition is full of useful information and its size lends itself to a briefcase or white coat pocket. This book would have been ideal for students sitting the Diploma of Anaesthesia, if this examination still existed. Candidates for the Final FRCA may find this book useful as a revision aid but it lacks the depth to be a front-line textbook. It will be particularly useful for newly qualified doctors doing house jobs in anaesthesia. Every departmental library should have a copy, and the anaesthetic content of the surgical fellowship would be well covered by this book.

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