

Regional Nerve Blocks (2nd edn)

Danilo Jankovic, Christopher Wells
Blackwell Science 2001
Price £99.50. Pp 340
ISBN 063205557X

This book is aimed at anaesthetists of varying expertise. Basic regional anaesthetic techniques are well covered, and there is ample teaching on advanced blocks and innovative indications. It performs well as a handbook to be brought into the operating department, studied before a procedure and then used in steps to implement the block.

The opening chapter discusses the pharmacology of local anaesthetics. This is appropriate for this book, but would not be adequate for Part 1 FRCA. The authors use generic drug names, but include several common trade names.

Throughout the text, blue boxes highlight areas of importance, hints for a successful block and safety rules. This is especially helpful when flicking through relevant chapters. Clear, colour photographs are widely used, illustrating patient position, equipment and stepwise demonstration of each technique. There are also some dramatic photographs of potential complications.

Each chapter commences with a relevant anatomical description, before moving on to clinical practice. Advantages and disadvantages of blocks are discussed, including a risk/benefit appraisal – a commendable feature.

Several chapters are worthy of special mention. Chapters 29, 30 and 31 explore spinal anaesthesia in a detail not encountered in many other books. Chapter 38 addresses combined spinal and epidural anaesthesia, an enduring topic of discussion in anaesthetic literature. Detailed information about materials and manufacturers is supplied.

This book will help anaesthetists carry out regional anaesthesia in a safe and useful manner, and should have pride of place in the operating theatre.
Suzanne Crowe, St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin

Getting Research Findings into Practice (2nd edn)

Edited by Andrew Haines and Anna Donald
BMJ Books 2001
Price £25.00. Pp 227
ISBN 0 7279 1553 3

'It is sometimes said that we would be better off now concentrating on putting into practice what is already known rather than undertaking further research', says Sir John Pattison in the foreword to this book. While he is not of this opinion, despite 10 years attention it is still difficult to convert knowledge into patient benefit. *Getting Research Findings into Practice* sets out to explain these difficulties and help to try and overcome them, and it succeeds. It has three particular strengths: diversity of content, practicality and depth.

Many different strands of the evidence movement are covered. There is an intriguing historical reflection on why two perinatal interventions were implemented at such different speeds, a dense but enlightening exposition on decision analysis and a pithy account of how societal values influence policies on breast screening in different countries.

This is not an academic tome, but a source of useful information for clinicians aiming to improve their own and others' practice. There are helpful lists of sources of clinical effectiveness information and an instructive account of initiatives aimed at supporting uptake of research knowledge.

Despite being short and accessible, this is not a lightweight book. Particularly stimulating is the chapter on why conventional economic evaluation, linked to randomized trials, may be losing its relevance, separated from developing thought in economics and the reality of health service change.

This book shows how a multi-authored text can appeal to a broad audience. It is recommended, especially for clinicians who want to learn more about making practice more evidence-based.
Tom Dent, University of Southampton

The Challenge of Hospital Acquired Infection

Karen Taylor, Rosalind Plowman, Jennifer A Roberts
National Audit Office 2001
Price £11.00. Pp 138
ISBN 0 11 702858 4

Infection control has become a government priority within the NHS. Standards have been issued and various reports have been published about the estimated patient and financial costs of hospital-acquired infection. Infection control is no longer just the responsibility of infection control teams but the responsibility of everyone working for the NHS.

This book reviews the main areas of concern in tackling hospital-acquired infection: the extent and cost of the problem, the management arrangements, government standards such as controls assurance, the role of clinical governance, the importance of surveillance, changing clinical practice to control and prevent infections, control of antibiotic resistance, and the potential impact of these strategies on mortality and morbidity.

Each section is summarized with helpful bullet points of the main features. It is concise and well referenced to allow readers to examine some points in more depth. The authors have done well to pool the current information together in one book, including a summary of the proceedings of the National Audit Office conference. While it does not provide specific infection control advice it allows better insight into some of the problems facing people implementing infection control programmes.

This book summarises the evidence that has guided government thinking. It is reasonably priced and pocket-sized. It should be a valuable resource for all doctors and nurses who wish to update their knowledge of the management and control of infection in hospital.
Donald Dobie, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham



To view our complete catalogue go to www.elsevierhealth.com

Take advantage of your 10% discount - use order details on facing page!

To order direct - tel: 020 8308 5760 fax: 020 8308 5702 email: daryl_midford@harcourt.com

