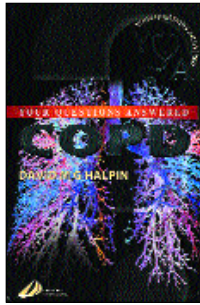


Your Questions Answered: COPD

David MG Halpin
Churchill Livingstone 2003
Price £16.99. Pp 147
ISBN 0443074380

Chronic obstructive lung disease (COPD) is one of the major killers in the UK, causing significant morbidity and cost to the individual and the community. However, health-care professionals and patients themselves had largely ignored COPD. Recently COPD has rightly raised its profile with publication of national and international guidelines, availability of more drugs, establishment of the role of non-pharmacological interventions such as pulmonary rehabilitation and political recognition of the importance of chronic disease management. This book is therefore published at a timely moment.

This small book is aimed at GPs and other primary care professionals. It has 14 chapters ranging from definition and pathology to diagnosis and management of patients with acute exacerbations and chronic stable COPD. Its question and answer format makes it easy and rewarding to dip into



but can cause fragmentation of themes and can be a bit wearing. At the end of each chapter are sections on frequently asked patient questions. It is unclear as to whether these are actually based on a survey of patients' questions but they will be useful when discussing the diagnosis and its treatment with patients and designing information leaflets.

David Halpin, the author, was also the chair of the committee that developed the National Institute for Clinical Excellence/British Thoracic Society

COPD guidelines. However, this book was published before these guidelines were produced and there are some differences, primarily in emphasis, between the two. These mainly reflect continued areas of controversy such as the definition of COPD and need for reversibility testing, and the role of inhaled corticosteroids.

This appealing book provides easy-to access, succinct answers to frequently asked questions. As such it should be useful to those health-care professionals primarily involved in the chronic management of patients with COPD.

Helena Booth, University College London Hospitals

An Aid to Medical Interviews and Professional Development

CK Maity
Sandpiper Publishing 2004
Price £9.95. Pp 74
ISBN 0953860647

The process of preparing for a medical interview is a daunting task. The information required is available by scouring hospital press and various websites. This book aims to collate some of this information and is very easy to read, giving succinct definitions and explanations of current topics.

However, this book has missed the opportunity to differentiate between interviews at different levels. Preparing for an interview for a senior house officer rotation is very different from an interview for a specialist registrar job or a consultant position. The shortlisting process, interview panel and equal opportunity laws are notable absences. The order in which the book is written could be improved. Rather than diving in with clinical governance issues, this book could have benefited from setting the scene with more practical issues including writing a curriculum vitae,

visiting the appropriate personnel, and preparing a presentation – issues which are addressed later but only after a lengthy tutorial in medical statistics.

For those who have been too busy on ward rounds or in clinics to keep up to date with current affairs in the NHS, this book is an excellent starter. The mysteries of clinical audit, appraisal and assessment are unravelled, and current NHS papers and policies are discussed.

This book would be a useful addition to a departmental bookshelf, although it should not be the only reference for potential interview candidates. In this current climate of change, this book will have a short shelf life and will require frequent updating.

Philippa Veale, Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham

Pressure Ulcers: Recent Advances in Tissue Viability

Edited by Michael Clark
MA Healthcare 2004
Price £29.99. Pp 131
ISBN 1856422631

The world of pressure ulcer research has always been a tangle. So many fishing lines – nursing, bioengineering,

biology, medicine – all casting into the same water. And for decades the water has been murky enough to conceal many unfounded assertions, prejudices, and myths lurking unchallenged alongside the truth.

In the last few years tissue viability has begun to mature as a science, and the water has started to clear. At this critical moment, Michael Clark takes an expert, reasoned and experienced overview, and begins to unravel the mess for us.

The book is logically arranged into four sections: Understanding the problem; Risk factors: facts and fallacies; Prevention: what works and what doesn't, and Moving the pressure ulcer debate forward. Contributions are drawn within these section from leading authorities in their fields, and each chapter has been introduced by the editor to give clarity and cohesion to the whole.

Dr Clark avoids excessive congratulations for pressure ulcer researchers. The tone is more one of challenge: can we now make an impact on this great and unsolved problem?

Duncan Bain, University College London