

Book Reviews

PATIENT PICTURES – ENT

M. Birchall, M. Hilton

Health Press,

ISBN 1-899541-31-4. Price £12.00

An inexpensive spiral bound paper-back, this is intended to be an aid to patient counselling in our speciality, providing a very simple explanation of common procedures, together with a series of drawings, which the purchaser is free to photocopy. This could be an aid to the personalized information sheets that most of us have produced. There is a move by the BAOHNS to standardize these and produce consensus documents, however. Furthermore, Trusts are increasingly keen to 'control' any documentation handed out, to ensure it conforms to national standards and, even more, carries their own Logos! The anatomical drawings are perhaps of greater value than pictures of a whispered voice test, or some unfortunate with her tongue seized by a laryngologist. Even then, the artists amongst us will prefer to start with a clean sheet of paper and develop a concept and drawing together. For the less talented this has some appealing features and most departments would find something of value to add to their literature.

LIAM M. FLOOD, FRCS
Middlesbrough

COLOUR ATLAS OF ORAL DISEASES

George Laskaris, 3rd edn.

Thieme, 2003

ISBN 3 13 130572 X,

Price Euros 139/SFr 211, pp 454

This is a third edition of a popular atlas of oral diseases. Various editions of the book have previously been published in Greek, French, Italian, English and Korean. It covers a wide spectrum of diseases of oral mucosa in a concise but comprehensive way. The subject area is divided into 39 chapters. Among other topics, the subject area covers developmental, traumatic, immunologic and neoplastic processes. The oral lesions due to drugs, radiation and infections including HIV are presented comprehensively. The effects of systemic diseases on oral tissues are also dealt with amicably. The text is presented in a simple and organized fashion. The photographs are all in outstanding colour. Many years of high quality photography is widely demonstrated throughout the book. This a single author book in plain English and easy to read. I admire its clarity and cohesiveness. I would have liked some flow charts and classifications and lists of differential diagnosis for junior clinicians preparing for examinations. It would also have been useful if an atlas of this quality was accompanied by an interactive CD.

This book will be a valuable resource for clinicians in oral medicine, dermatology, otorhinolaryngologists and maxillofacial surgeons. I will recommend this as valuable addition to a departmental library.

SHAUKAT MAHMOOD
Regional Maxillofacial Unit
Southern General Hospital
Glasgow

MAINTENANCE MANUAL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Published by AAO-HNS Foundation, Inc. 2002

This package comes in a large but not particularly robust plastic presentation case. It comprises a CD-ROM and two books of approximately A4 size; a 'Study Guide' having 110 chapters and in excess of 750 pages, and a slim volume entitled 'Question and Critique Book'.

The preface of the Study Guide states 'The primary goal of the 'Maintenance Manual for Lifelong Learning' is to address issues that are of practical importance for otolaryngologists in improving patient care.' It also intriguingly states that the manual has been 'authored by committee'. This explains why 'writing committees' made up of a total of 191 contributors are identified for each section, but the authors of individual chapters are not identified, which struck me as rather unusual. The preface ends by challenging the reader to 'embrace the habits necessary to maintain lifelong medical education.'

The package has a few strengths – the Study Guide resembles a standard multi-author textbook. It is well laid out, and readable, although I felt it could benefit from some more illustrations. There are fairly extensive bibliographies for most chapters. I found the index poorly constructed. The Question and Critique book is in two parts; the first contains the 227 multiple choice questions; in the second part they are reproduced, with the correct answer identified, with an explanation and a reference to a paragraph of the study guide. The CD-ROM appeared to contain nothing more than the text of the Study Guide, combined with related multiple-choice questions. I had hoped for a 'search' facility, or extra audio-visual presentations, or even links to web-based information to keep the package up to date. I was disappointed.

The package is linked to the award of CME credits by The American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Foundation. Credits are awarded for completion and submission of the enclosed multiple-choice exam paper. This would follow, it is assumed by the Academy, reading and studying the Manual, which it is estimated would take 60 hours.

This package makes me feel a little uneasy, for several reasons.

It appears to be attempting to cover our wide and expanding field in its entirety, and in enough detail for any otolaryngologists who might turn to it. The problem is that most of us now are to some extent subspecialized in our clinical practice; this package covers many, many topics, but only in the depth a generalist might require. Otolaryngologists are a diverse group, and to use a cliché 'you can't please all of the people all of the time.' It was published in 2002, and the CME points are available until May 2004. I found areas in which recent research was not cited, suggesting that although this package sets out to describe recent advances in Otolaryngology, it is out of date almost from the time of publication, just like any other book.

In what might be an alarming window into the practice of our American colleagues, the first and third chapters of *The Study Guide* are about managing the financial side of otolaryngological practice. The second chapter is possibly even more alarming – entitled 'Ethics – just the basics' – it doesn't mention informed consent, or patient autonomy, or confidentiality – its subheadings are Money, Sex, Power and Personal Integrity – in that order!

Looking at this package from an educational point of view, my concerns continue – A key principle of adult education is that adult learners should determine their own learning needs, and then plan their own educa-

tional activities accordingly. Another is that adults are most strongly motivated by personal goals, and are particularly keen to undertake learning which has direct relevance to the daily demands on them. It is difficult to imagine how the application of these principles could lead to an otolaryngologist reading the *Study Guide* from cover to cover, and answering the 227 multiple choice questions required for award of CME credits. 'Reflective practice', which is also beloved by educationalists, includes the deep reflection and search for answers, which we should embark on following any 'adverse event'. If such a search for answers led an otolaryngologist to turn to a book, I think a more specialist book than this would be much more useful.

In conclusion, *The Study Guide*, on its own, is a moderately useful 'free-standing' resource for the otolaryngologist who wants to keep (fairly!) up to date with topics across the whole field. It would be important, however to remain aware that it is written primarily for the American market. I would say it is pitched at about the level of the Intercollegiate 'Part III' exam, on this side of the Atlantic. I do not feel the opportunity to complete a multiple-choice exam adds any educational value to the package, and the CD-ROM was just plain disappointing.

HELEN C. RICHARDSON

Consultant and Honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer,
Otolaryngology, South Tees Trust