

## Book Reviews

Edited by Sidney Crown and Alan Lee

**The Psychiatric Mental State Examination.** By PAULA T. TRZEPACZ and ROBERT W. BAKER. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1993. 202 pp. £30.00 (hb).

The ability to conduct an accurate and sensitive mental state examination is central to all psychiatric practice. It is difficult to overemphasise the importance of this skill. While most basic psychiatric texts include a chapter on the mental state examination, I believe this subject is of sufficient importance to warrant a book devoted exclusively to it. Phenomenology and psychopathology are complex subjects which can be off-putting to trainees. This book, however, manages to live up to the description in the preface of being 'user friendly'. It is written in a very clinically relevant way, by authors who appear to be experienced clinicians and teachers. Although not specifically a text on interview skills, it is liberally sprinkled with sensible, practical comments on eliciting information and conducting interviews. A chapter is devoted to each major section of the mental state examination, and at the end of each chapter is a list of relevant definitions. The book is comprehensive without being too long or excessively detailed.

In my opinion this book is the best to date on the subject, and will be of enormous value to trainees sitting Part I of the MRCPsych as well as more experienced practitioners, tutors and examiners. Although the authors are from the US, the book will be equally valuable to readers in the UK and elsewhere. Unfortunately, this excellent text is only available in hardback and this may put off some potential purchasers. I would therefore urge the publishers to produce an appropriately priced paperback edition which could potentially become a recommended basic text for all psychiatric trainees.

JEANETTE SMITH, *Fromeside Clinic, Blackberry Hill, Stapleton, Bristol*

**Marketing Mental Health Services to Managed Care.**

By NORMAN WINEGAR and JOHN L. BISTLINE. New York: Haworth. 1994. 199 pp. US \$28.95 (pb), \$37.95 (hb).

This book concerns the marketing of mental health services to purchasing agents. Its key audience is the

membership of mental health service providers in the US. Here, the main purchasers are Health Maintenance Organisations or Preferred Provider Organisations, which have been established to apply management processes to the health care benefits employers have established to cover the treatment of illnesses affecting their workers and families. However, the principles of marketing mental health services to such organisations are likely to be equally as relevant to UK as to US service providers, thanks to the new NHS internal market.

The strengths of the book lie in the authors' abilities to give basic lessons on marketing mental health services to clinicians and other professionals who have had no experience of this brave new world of competition in mental health care. The book is intended as a resource or reference point and assumes little or no previous knowledge of marketing or contracting for services. The messages conveyed will be anticipated by those who have become accustomed to the commercially-oriented languages of health care markets. Service provision has to be shown to be sensitive to users' needs, has to be of proved effectiveness and provided at the lowest feasible cost.

If you are new to these current developments of managed markets for mental health care, you will find that this book will help you to make a start and understand the environment in which you are working. However, if you are now in your second or third round of contract negotiations with purchasers it is doubtful that you will find much that you did not already know.

KEN WRIGHT, *Centre for Health Economics, University of York*

**Handbook of Dementing Illnesses** (Neurological Disease and Therapy Series 22). Edited by JOHN C. MORRIS. New York: Marcel Dekker. 1993. 657 pp. US \$175.00 (hb).

Our understanding of the dementias has progressed so rapidly in recent years, and on so many fronts, that most clinicians and researchers now have considerable difficulty in keeping up. This is particularly true in the neurosciences, where new and important findings now appear at such a rate and in such quantities that only those most closely involved with this area can hope to