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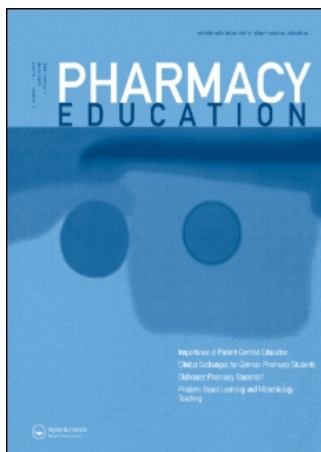
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## Book Reviews

### Pharmacy Practice

Patricia Stone and Stephen Curtis, (Eds) 5th Ed, ISBN 0 85369 482 6. Paperback 344 pp. August 2002, Pharmaceutical Press, London.

The book opens with a preface describing the authors' aims for the book, that it be used as an introduction to advanced pharmacy practice, with extensive reference lists and new chapters to reflect the changing nature of the pharmacy profession (such as a new complete chapter on primary care pharmacy). A section "about the authors" provides context and insight into the backgrounds of the authors.

The book describes developments in healthcare over the past decade to 15 years and their impact on pharmacy.

The book is divided into three sections: Part 1 deals with issues around "Medicines and the patient"; part 2 deals with "Management of resources, quality and audit" and Part 3 deals with health care organisation. There is a useful glossary section that provides details of abbreviations.

Part 1 comprises eight chapters moving from issues around prescribers and patients; the manufacture and marketing of pharmaceuticals; primary care pharmacy (a new chapter); pharmacy in the community; dispensing prescriptions; hospital pharmaceutical services (two chapters that deal with general and specialised care provision); and the pharmacists as a healthcare professional. This section usefully outlines terms and definitions of care and access which are very useful for the new practitioner or indeed, pharmacists from other countries. Chapters 1 and 4–7 are extremely valuable for students/graduates from other countries, both as information and reference sources, when trying to understand exactly how the NHS functions in general and pharmacy functions in the community and hospital. Chapter 2 provides accessible information about pharmaceuticals in practice. For example, definitions of terms used to describe

various supplies, controls placed on suppliers and how they are marketed. Chapters 3 and 8 place the evolving profession into context; how pharmacy is now established in primary care and how pharmacists relate and work alongside other healthcare professionals.

Part 2 comprises three chapters around Human resource management; Quality management in health care and Finance, information and procurement. The first chapter (chapter 9) deals with "HR" by providing insights into employment law, discrimination, appointing and dismissing staff, health and welfare, recruitment and training, and staff development. The level of detail is appropriate for someone relatively new to management who requires some insight; more detail can then be provided if needed by a more specialised text. Chapter 10 gives an outline of quality management in healthcare, as recommended in the Griffith's report of 1983 to more recent White Papers that focus on improving standards of care across the NHS, including National service Frameworks, clinical governance, NICE and CHI to name but a few. In addition, the chapter outlines methods used to establish and maintain standards at all levels. Chapter 11 provides an essential overview of funding within the NHS, useful for all who work in the Service and who teach healthcare professionals. The ways finances are held, distributed, controlled and accessed is summarised in a clear and concise way, which is very useful. The chapter then describes the use of computers and information technology in the NHS and the NHS Information Strategy as well as the influence of electronic communication on procurement.

Part 3 comprises one self explanatory chapter, around Healthcare organisation in the UK, an essential read for professionals new to the UK or

snewly qualified professionals in the UK. The chapter summarises the structure and management of the NHS, and development through various NHS documents. Issues include contracting for services (as well as proposed new methods), grading and organisation of staff. In summary, the book provides concise insights into both general and specialised areas of service delivery, including pharmacy. The book could be well used by students and

pharmacists to provide insights into the every changing NHS and its impact on the delivery of pharmacy over recent years.

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## Herbal Medicine

Joanne Barnes, Linda Anderson and J. David Philipson, (Eds) 2nd Ed, ISBN 0 85369 474 5. Hardback 544pp, May 2002, US\$59.95, ISBN 0 85369 500 8, Single user CD ROM May 2002, US\$1115.00, ISBN 0 85369 528 8, Single user CD ROM plus Book May 2002, US\$145.95, Pharmaceutical Press, London

The book opens with a preface that describes the need for the second edition; that interest has grown in recent years is demonstrated by increased sales of herbal medicinal products in Europe and the USA as well as greater awareness among the public and healthcare professionals about natural health products and complementary medicines. The book provides factual information on almost 150 herbal ingredients present in herbal medicinal products in European and other developed countries.

The book opens with a useful "about the authors" section, which provides insights on the expertise and background of the authors. This is followed by a section on how to use it: both as a references source with 148 detailed monographs on individual herbal ingredients including licensed and non licensed products within Europe and the UK. Criteria for assessment include safety and efficacy of the products and, often specific to herbal remedies, guidance on quality assessment. The monographs include details of adverse effects, the potential to interact with other medication and use during pregnancy. They are presented in alphabetical order with respect the common name, using a data sheet-type format to ensure the layout was familiar to users of the book (namely pharmacists and doctors). I found the "how to use" section particularly informative providing insight into the breadth and depth of information contained.

The introduction chapter provides background on the increasingly important place that herbal products and natural remedies hold in society and re-enforces the need for such a reference book for practitioners

and researchers alike: explicit in the Report on Complementary and Alternative Medicine by the House of Lords Select Committee, which highlights the lack of comprehensive information on the use of herbal medicines in the UK as well as literature detailing ever increasing use of herbal remedies. As well as providing background, this section deals relevance to professional use, regulatory and licensing controls, present and future and issues around quality, safety and efficacy, as well as a specific section on "herbal medicinal products of current interest". Different approaches to regulation of herbal medicinal products as well as different traditions in their therapeutic use demonstrate the variation in regulatory controls in the EU alone. Examples are provided to give insight into the variance in quality due to substitution and adulteration as well as problems with unregulated products and quality of regulated products. Tables are used to summarise information such as adverse effects, in a useful and accessible way and there is a useful section on "herbal medicinal products of current interest".

The book comprises 148 monographs on individual herbal medicinal ingredients found in herbal products. They are presented in alphabetical order, by their common name (preferred common name, other synonyms and Latin binomial names are listed in the index). In the "how to use" section, a summary table is provided that details all the information contained in each monograph as well as providing a brief explanation. Each of the 148 herbs commonly present in herbal medicinal products are presented under the following headings Species (family); Synonyms

(particularly useful); Parts used; Legal category; Constituents; Food use; Herbal use; Dosage; Pharmacological actions; *In vitro* and animal studies; Clinical studies; Side effects/toxicity; Contra-indications/warnings; Pharmaceutical comment; References. Further lists of detailed and comprehensive references (specific and general) are provided. This level of information will meet all users needs, providing enough depth for the "novice" and enough scope for further investigation for the "expert".

In summary, I found the book well laid out and easy to use. The information contained was expertly presented but accessible and useful for all forms of use.

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## Pharmaceutical Statistics

David Jones, (Ed.) ISBN 0 85369 4257. Paperback 608pp, US\$45.95, Pharmaceutical Press, London

For most students, statistics has little relevance to pharmacy and would prefer not to be faced with it. However, there is an increasing emphasis on data handling in the pharmacy undergraduate curriculum and an evidence-based need for qualified pharmacists to be able to interpret results of experimental data and clinical trials. Understanding statistics is no longer an optional extra, but a necessity. "*Pharmaceutical Statistics*" has been published with the intention of dispelling the image that statistics is steeped in mathematics and shows that a wide pharmaceutical context is possible.

The textbook is well constructed and designed to meet the demands of both undergraduate pharmacy students and those engaged in postgraduate studies. A good introductory chapter sets the scene for those who have little prior knowledge of this subject. Chapters have been organised logically with each chapter building on the preceding one allowing students to come to a gradual understanding of more complex statistical principles. There are worked examples throughout maintaining pharmaceutical relevance and an excellent summary is provided at the end of each chapter to support student understanding and progression.

Chapters 1–4 have been based to meet the immediate demands of understanding terminology,

basic statistical principles, sampling strategies, data presentation and introducing probability theory. The following chapters focus more on validation and examination of statistical hypotheses using mathematical means. There are good chapters on understanding of confidence intervals, parametric and non-parametric testing and linear regression. The later chapters are more useful for students engaged in higher studies who require greater knowledge about statistical theory.

In my opinion, this is an excellent reference textbook for any shelf. Undergraduate students can use it in tandem with their pharmacy degree and gain confidence in application of statistical methods. For those engaged in higher studies, it is a useful resource for developing a stronger foundation on this subject and choosing the most appropriate test for experimental data. For pharmacists and scientists engaged in clinical trial evaluation and analysis of data, it is a useful refresher to ensure that tests being used are valid.

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