

BOOKS

## Clinical guide with a focus on policies and procedures

*'Clinical pharmacy', edited by Nick Barber and Alan Willson. Pp xii+502. Price £19.99. Oxford: Churchill Livingstone Elsevier; 2007. ISBN 0 443 07443 7*

This book discusses many topics in the field of clinical pharmacy. It focuses on procedures and policies. It is a paperback book and A5 in size.

There are four sections in the book. The first discusses policies in drug licensing, evidence-based practice and pharmacoeconomics. The second section is about choice, ie, the choice pharmacists have in the treatment of pain, infection and other areas. The third section deals with monitoring and management of medication errors, prescriptions and patients with renal or hepatic disease. The final section is a reference section that covers side effects, laboratory tests and the international system of units. Each chapter is split into sections dealing with different topics.

The extensive reference section would be useful for hospital pharmacists and the smoking cessation chapter helpful for community pharmacists. Since the book mainly discusses procedures and policies in practice, it is a good guide for students and preregistration trainees. However, for that same reason, I think it has limited value for practising pharmacists who are surrounded by these policies and procedures in their daily working lives.

**Uzma Chaudhry**

## Trustworthy, affordable and practical source of drug interaction information

*'Stockley's drug interactions 2007 pocket companion', edited by Karen Baxter. Pp 544. Price £21.95. London: Pharmaceutical Press; 2006. ISBN 0 85369 701 9*

Homer warned over three millennia ago that "many drugs were excellent when mingled and many were fatal". Sadly, drug interactions continue to cause avoidable patient morbidity and mortality. 'Stockley's drug interactions 2007 pocket companion' seeks to provide concise, accurate and clinically relevant information to health care professionals. There has been inevitable pruning of the

nearly 3,000 interactions listed in the standard edition of 'Stockley's'. Specialised medication and non-interactions are mostly out as, too, are the references on which judgements are based. Usefully, herb-drug and drug-food interactions are included.

Arranged alphabetically by drug, or drug group, the book has no need for an index. The book is easy to use, with clear formatting and typesetting. An intuitive rating system enables quick evaluation of whether a reaction is significant or not.

This guide pitches itself at a midway point between the brevity of the BNF and the comprehensiveness of the full 'Stockley's', with, arguably, clearer advice on management of particular reactions than either.

Fewer people wear laboratory coats these days, with a corresponding loss of pocket space. Whether this book will be carried with the BNF to wards is debatable: a personal digital assistant could be of more use. But new prescribers and those who require a trustworthy, affordable and practical source of drug interaction information should welcome this new publication.

**Anthony Cox**

## Evidence-based handbook on drug administration via enteral feeding tubes

*'Handbook of drug administration via enteral feeding tubes', by Rebecca White and Vicky Bradnam. Pp 592. Price £39.95. London: Pharmaceutical Press; 2006. ISBN 0 85369 648 9*

This useful publication has been produced by the authors on behalf of the British Pharmaceutical Nutrition Group. Introductory chapters provide background information on topics such as types of enteral feeding tubes, care of tubes and review of drug regimens and formulation choices. There is also a chapter highlighting some of the complex legal and professional issues surrounding the administration of drugs via enteral feeding tubes. Most of the handbook, however, comprises an A to Z series of drug monographs providing detailed information to assist in choosing a safe method of administering drugs via intragastric or intrajejunal routes.

A major strength of this handbook, particularly compared with other reference sources on this topic, is the extensive efforts of the authors to ensure the evidence-based nature of the information provided. Most advice is referenced, with the BPNG conducting in-house research where none was available. Although some of the information within the

monographs would be available elsewhere, the authors have collated and interpreted the data succinctly. Although the handbook is not exhaustive, all commonly used drugs (and information on multiple brands) are included resulting in a BNF-sized text. Hopefully, regular review of the handbook will take place to incorporate new drugs, brands and formulations to maintain its accuracy.

This handbook will be of benefit to pharmacists and other health professionals involved in caring for patients receiving medicines via enteral feeding tubes in both primary and secondary care. Although the cost may preclude this being provided to individual pharmacists, departments should consider this an essential addition to their references.

**Nicola Ward**

## A reference source for current practices in biopharmaceutical processing

*'Advanced technologies in biopharmaceutical processing', edited by Roshni Dutton and Jenö Schärer. Pp 336. Price £99.50. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd; 2007. ISBN 0 81380517 1*

The total pharmaceutical market is now worth \$56bn. Even at an estimated 10 per cent of this figure, the biopharmaceutical sector is still huge and is growing fast as more and more biological knowledge is accumulated and applied to the development of new medicines. Consequently, more and more pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities are being turned over to biopharmaceutical processing, and this book is a timely contribution to the industry. Quite properly, the volume puts biopharmaceutical processing into its historical context — a large part of the industry was, after all, founded on fermentation processes for antibiotics. It then goes on to give comprehensive descriptions of the new processes that are finding their way into both upstream (processes leading to the active pharmaceutical) and downstream (processing the active material into a product) sectors. Chapters on analytical control of biological processes, and the impact and importance of the regulatory environment are essential additions to the text.

Anything with "advanced" in the title runs the risk of rapidly becoming out of date and the editors have partly met this by including lists of relevant websites in the bibliography for about half of the chapters, although, paradoxically, hard copy literature references will still be available long after some of the websites have disappeared.

As an encyclopaedic reference source for the current practices in biopharmaceutical processing, the price seems reasonably in line with similarly targeted specialist texts.

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