

# Reviews

## Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry (2nd edn)

David Semple & Roger Smyth

Version 1.1.0 for iPhone, iPod touch and iPad. Oxford University Press/MedHand Mobile Libraries, 2009, €44.99.

The first edition of the *Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry* became ubiquitous quickly after its publication in 2005, rapidly appearing in the pockets and bags of medical students and junior medical staff alike. However, this 976-page volume was criticised for its 'bulkiness'<sup>1</sup> and thus the second edition would appear to be a perfect candidate for transition to a digital model for handheld devices, in this example the increasingly prominent iPhone and iPod touch as well as iPad.

To start with content, many of the good points from the first edition are maintained. There are 26 chapters, each organised around significant topic areas, be they subspecialties, diagnoses or clinical issues. Reading the book it feels logical and geared towards accessibility of the content. The text initially seems brief but is actually truly concise and contains a surprising amount of information. It is thoughtfully written, aiming above all at the day-to-day practice of psychiatry and why we investigate and manage as we do. There is also a very well-written introductory chapter, 'Thinking about psychiatry'. At the end of the book is a list of ICD-10 and DSM-IV codes, which is extremely handy to have in your pocket. For this new edition, extensively revised topics include concise chapters on the Mental Health Act and capacity legislation (covering Scotland as well as England and Wales). Also revised are the chapters on schizophrenia and chapters on intellectual disabilities, child psychiatry and psychotherapy.

An important aspect of this book is the potential to bring more use from the electronic medium rather than just a reduction in physical size, but here the handbook disappoints. There are good points, the application feels responsive and quick to the touch, the size of text is adjustable for ease of reading and when small graphs are pressed they expand into larger versions. Bookmarks are easy to make and edit and can be picked up again almost instantly. There is a good use of cross-reference within the pages of the book too, but critically all of the external references included in the paper version seem to have been removed. Not only should they not have been removed, but other applications can link to internet resources and one would think that linking the text to PubMed would have been logical. The one area where this is done is in the 'Resources' section at the end of the book, linking not just to clinician but also patient resources. There is no clear link to the contents page of the book, although one can be made using the bookmarks function. Navigation is made more difficult as pages cannot be 'turned' in a logical fashion. For example, if one wishes to compare the ICD-10 criteria for schizophrenia with the DSM-IV criteria, which would be page by page in the paper edition, one must first return to a contents page and then select the next section instead of selecting just the next page. The final omission is that of blank pages. The omission of blank space would be a ridiculous thing to complain about in most texts, yet in Oxford handbooks this is precious space,

used to add in memorable clinical experience and mnemonics. Although there could be limitless notes pages in this edition, there is actually none at all.

This will not be the largest or most in-depth textbook you could own, but as both a memory aid and as an introduction to the specialty it is hard to criticise the content. There is something here for all levels of the profession; it is valuable for more senior clinicians in clinic for quickly looking up presentations which are not seen every day, and for more junior colleagues who are acquiring basic knowledge and skills. Unfortunately, the portability of this version of the book is compromised by the feeling that it is very much a digital version of the printed book and it sticks very closely to its paper roots, rather than a product ready to make the most of a new medium and technology. This is made more difficult to swallow as the paper version can be purchased for just half the price of the electronic version. Although a good text, readers need to think about how they will use the book before deciding which version to buy.

1 Mallikarjun PK. Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry (book review). *Psychiatr Bull* 2006; **30**: 199.

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## Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services: An Operational Handbook (2nd edn)

Greg Richardson, Ian Partridge & Jonathan Barrett (eds)  
RCPsych Publications, 2010, £30.00 pb, 352 pp.  
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This is an updated edition of a justifiably popular 'how to do it' manual. As with most multi-author books, there is some variability between chapters but this has clearly been minimised by the three editors being authors of a remarkable number of the chapters (20 of 33). Two-thirds of the authors work in Yorkshire. This gives the book a striking degree of coherence but there does remain a fundamental tension between two quite different models of service delivery. Chapters 11 and 13 make a systemic, ideologically satisfying argument for the withering away of the very concept of referral to secondary care by the concentration of energy and resources on tier 1 child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Several subsequent chapters, especially those describing service delivery to specific population and diagnostic groups, adhere to the traditional model of referral from primary to secondary care. Sitting somewhat uncomfortably alongside this dichotomous tension is York & Kingsbury's chapter on demand and capacity management, which accepts the concept of referrals but suggests quite a different approach to processing them. Absent almost entirely is a discussion of contract currency development – one suspects this is because