
This book is written by three speech pathologists with a special interest in cleft palates and is directed towards speech therapists and surgeons treating these congenital deformities.

The first half of the book therefore describes the incidence, treatment, and problems with cleft palate surgery and will be familiar to surgeons; the second half is perhaps more directed towards the speech therapist.

The book is very well researched and nicely written and I found it a pleasure to read. The first half provides the speech therapist with an overview of the treatment of the deformity and is well described, but perhaps a few omissions might be worth including. No mention is made of the immediate postnatal insertion of a plate in the wide palatal cleft to exclude the tongue from the nasal cavity. Provided this plate is inserted within the first few days of life it is well tolerated and permits the potential growth in the palatal shelves to proceed unobstructed, consequently making the repair at six months to one year very much easier and safer. Pierre Robin deformity with a very wide cleft of the palate and therefore a much greater chance of speech pathology is particularly helped by this technique. Perhaps also a mention should be made of the pharyngoplasties that do not invade the soft palate and produce further fibrosis and stiffness, particularly the orticochea and Jackson's modification; also no mention is made of the Hynes procedure.

The speech pathologist/therapist's place in the cleft palate team relates very much to decisions on the timing and value of pharyngoplasty, and a good working knowledge of these procedures and how they attempt to close the velopharyngeal space would be an advantage.

Although mentioned, nasendoscopy either with a rigid or fibroscope is perhaps the most trusted method for examining the anatomy of velopharyngeal incompetence, certainly in the United Kingdom, and it is supported by lateral video fluoroscopy and Skolnick views. Speech therapists attending these examinations commonly find it helpful in correlating with their speech assessments.

The authors have perhaps sought to cover areas that are somewhat unnecessary such as craniofacial deformities, but there is much of interest for speech therapists and surgeons alike and those involved in the treatment of cleft palate will find this book a valuable addition to their library.


Like its predecessors Essential Paediatrics and Hospital Paediatrics, Community Paediatrics is based on teaching material used for the Nottingham Community Paediatric course. In its stated aim to appeal to doctors involved in community paediatrics, whether in general practice, hospital, or community, as well as to health visitors and school nurses, it succeeds admirably.

The book begins appropriately with a chapter on 'Services', emphasising from the start the need for the various professionals involved in child health care to understand one another's work and coordinate their efforts. The following chapters on 'Information', 'Screening', and 'Families and homes' provide a brief introduction to epidemiological method and its practical applications. The chapter on 'Growth and development' gives useful practical guidelines for developmental milestones and emphasises the need for the community paediatrician to be an expert in 'normality' and the wide range of individual variations which it embraces. The chapters on 'Genetics', 'Nutrition', 'Hazards', and 'Infections' (including immunisation procedures and programmes) contain a wealth of concisely presented information. Two middle chapters of the book on 'Problems' (0-5 and 5-15) cover the range of physical and emotional problems likely to be encountered by the community paediatrician, including in many cases indications for referral (for example, in cases of headache and short stature). The remainder of the book covers the subject of 'Long-standing illness', 'Physical and mental handicap', and Disorders of vision, hearing and speech', (including screening techniques and programmes). The chapter on 'Health and learning' gives an up to date review on the school doctor's role in identification and multidisciplinary assessment of the child with special educational needs.

Emotional and behavioural disturbances in childhood are considered under a chapter entitled 'Behaviour'. The final chapter on 'Protection of children' provides a brief historical background followed by an account of the current legislation with regard to special educational needs, children in care, fostering and adoption, and child abuse.

As an introduction to community paediatrics for a newcomer to the field or as a reference book plus a source of further reading matter for those professionals already in it, this text book is highly recommended.


Health at School is written for school nurses. The book starts by considering the history and structure of services. It goes on to describe professional approaches and attitudes and then deals with the conduct of individual sessions, health education, children with special needs, specific physical disorders, and socially related problems.

The book is written by experienced school nurses. The text is very clearly laid out and organised and where appropriate is supplemented by line diagrams and illustrations. This is a very thoughtful work which will not only inform at a factual level but will also lead the reader to consider very carefully her professional role, her relationships with others, and the approach which she takes to her various tasks. The arguments in spite of their complexity come over with great clarity and in places with humour. This is a very good book which both new and experienced school nurses will find useful. It would perform an excellent text for the new courses in school nursing that are being set up around the country.

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