

BOOK REVIEW

PSYCHIATRY FOR DOCTORS

Edited By : EH Kua, SM Ko and LCC Lim
Year of Publication : 1995
Publisher : Armour Academics

SINGAPORE MED J 1996; Vol 37: 331

In general, this book, which the authors have written mainly for medical students and medical practitioners, is very readable. It is not too verbose and is well-structured, thus making it easy for both medical students and non-psychiatrists to read and understand. Also, the book focuses on psychiatric problems and their management in the local context. As such, this is helpful for medical students taking exams as books published abroad might list management regimes different from those in use locally.

The amount of detail also deserves comment. It is fairly substantial and thus would encompass what most medical students would expect to know about psychiatry and yet, perhaps because of the layout of the contents, it does not give the impression of being excessively daunting to the student facing psychiatry for the first time.

The book contains chapters on the basic sciences which are important in the understanding of the basis of psychiatric problems and their management. Apart from chapters dealing with general psychiatry, there is also a section dealing with special

areas of psychiatry. This includes subspecialty areas like child and adolescent psychiatry as well as areas particularly applicable locally, for example, military psychiatry (which would be useful for those who would be serving as NS medical officers later).

Most chapters end with a short description of a real-life case which illustrates a particular psychiatric problem. This section can be useful as it brings the problem to life in a real patient as opposed to just being a set of symptoms and signs listed in a book. However, there was some inconsistency in the naming of the patients, with some authors using names and others using initials. This might be a point to consider during the preparation of the next edition.

In essence, this is a book which would prove useful to medical students studying psychiatry and would probably continue to prove useful in the years following graduation, given the increasing recognition of the role of psychiatry in medicine today.

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