GIMEDIA REVIEWS

Precepting Medical Students in the Office. EDITED BY PAUL M. PAULMAN, MD, JEFFREY L. SUSSMAN, MD, AND CHERYL A. ABBOD, MPA. Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. 205 pages; \$20.95.

Precepting Medical Students in the Office is written for community-based preceptors in primary care specialties. It is meant to offer practical insights into the education of students in office settings, written so that each chapter may also be used as a stand-alone reference. The book is divided into seven units, each consisting of multiple chapters, and includes two brief appendices. The scope of content is broad, covering such topics as the history of precepting in medical education, learner needs, clinical teaching models, curriculum content, and administrative and legal issues. The editors do a very good job of highlighting the key points at the beginning of each chapter, so that the reader is able to identify relevant material quickly. Chapter 5, entitled *Learning Needs of Medical Students*, provides an informative review of learner needs by medical school year, which is an often-overlooked topic in similar manuals. Community preceptors may be far enough removed from their own medical school years that they may have forgotten what a second-year medical student should know. Section III on *Clinical Teaching* is the longest and most cohesive portion of the book. This section walks the reader through topics ranging from orienting and integrating the medical student into the practice, to providing feedback and evaluation. Material in the other sections frequently overlaps with, and reiterates, material presented in Section III. Given this redundancy, the editors sometimes bury important information in a chapter in which the reader might not intuitively look for it. The book also seemed to be written by, and oriented toward, family physicians, which may put off some general internists or other primary care providers. For example, the writers frequently use the term "family physician" instead of the more generic "community-based preceptor" or "primary care physician." In fact, the *Forward* of the book refers to only to family physicians specifically. In summary, the book is a good resource including a broad range of information relative to teaching medical students in a private office setting. The text can be redundant, with a lack of cohesion across chapters, but many of the chapters stand on their own very well as references.

Teaching in Your Office, A Guide to Instructing Medical Students and Residents. PATRICK C. ALGUIRE, MD, DAWN E. DEWITT, MD, LINDA E. PINSKY, MD, GARY S. FERENCHICK, MD.

Philadelphia, Penn: American College of Physicians, 2001. 145 pages; \$25.00.

Teaching in Your Office is written for physicians interested in improving their office-based teaching skills. The book's purpose is to help office-based physicians improve their teaching of medical students and residents, while maintaining efficiency in their practice. It is divided into eight sections covering such topics as contemplation of accepting a learner, to preceptor and learner evaluation. There are also three appendices providing bulleted summaries of important content material, assorted forms for preceptor use, and listings of additional resources. The preface of the book gives a one-sentence overview of each chapter and defines the target audience for that chapter. This design is very practical for the busy practitioner looking for specific information. The chapters are laid out in a logical order, and walk the preceptor through all the steps of having a learner in the office. Each chapter is well organized and concise, using examples, bulleted lists, and tables for additional clarity. Chapter 5, *Getting Ready to Teach*, lays a wonderful foundation that covers all of the information needed to prepare a preceptor, his/her office staff, and his/her patients for a learner in the environment. Chapter 7, *Case-Based Learning*, will encourage even seasoned community-based teachers to rethink the ways in which they work with learners, and to improve upon their existing teaching skills. The appendices themselves are a very valuable reference resource. They include several "to do" lists to use when preparing the office for a learner, bulleted summaries of the case-based learning models presented in chapter 7, a table with "good and bad" feedback language, examples of learner contracts and skills inventories, sample written notices to patients about having a learner in the office, and sample preceptor and learner patient schedules. Given the current climate with regard to charting and billing, I would like to have seen more in-depth information on *Heath Care Financing Administration* (HCFA) guidelines with regard to learner documentation in charts, and the associated allowable billing. Overall, this book is an excellent reference for both new and veteran community-based preceptors.

American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine Website (Available at www.acponline.org/cme/cbt)

The ACP-ASIM Online Community-Based Preceptor Page is part of the larger ACP-ASIM site that serves as a resource on a broad array of topics for internists in the community and in academia. The Community-Based Preceptor (CBT) page focuses on issues and information of relevance to community-based preceptors and administrators of community-based teaching programs. The page is divided into 3 main sections that have some overlap. The "What's New" section is periodically updated with the latest news and information. This may include bios of award recipients, new teaching materials, or press releases. These items are highlighted here but will be found again within the other two sections. The "Administrative Resources" section has materials aimed more toward clerkship directors and program directors. Preceptors interested in being proactive in the

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development of unique curricula for their setting may find useful information here. The final section "Preceptor Resources" contains all of the material appropriate for community-based preceptors. This section is divided by content into 8 parts. Included are clinical skills inventories/learner contracts, which can be downloaded or printed for use, an overview of the Medicare system for learners, information on content and ordering of the *Medical Knowledge Self Assessment Program* (MKSAP) for students to use to supplement learning in the office, teaching award information and applications, a database of

mostly free teaching materials available to order, a small listing of preceptor opportunities nationally, listings of pertinent regional and national conferences, and a sign-up to receive the free CBT newsletter. The site is a good reference for a limited scope of materials. The printable products and the extensive database of office-based teaching materials are the strongest parts of the site. A nice addition would be a chat room in which preceptors could exchange experiences and ideas. — **DONNA L. PARKER, MD**, Associate Dean for Student and Faculty Development, University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, Md.