going?" Without exception, the authors have been able to summarise what is often a mass of complex information and present it in a clear, concise and well-referenced way. It is easy to read and I even read much of it on holiday. The chapters entitled 'The TME debate in the light of the Dutch radiotherapy trial', 'New pharmacology' (for IBD) and 'Frontiers in fistula' are particularly well presented.

Any surgeon or specialist nurse, who requires the re-assurance of knowing the evidence base of their practice, should read this book. It is a 'must' for those taking a postgraduate examination in coloproctology and indeed for those examining in them. I shall value having ready access to the information that it provides for those times when I am asked to do a postgraduate teaching session at short notice. Highly recommended.

Making it in British Medicine: Essential Guide for International Doctors

SABINA DOSANI, PETER CROSS

EXTENT P/H	176 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£21.95 1857758757
PUBLISHER	Radcliffe (Oxford), 2004
REVIEWERS	Mohammed El Maaytah and Nick Kalavrezos
STAR RATING	****

The opening chapter, 'Before leaving home', concisely covers what the overseas doctor should expect and lists the essentials for training/working in the UK. The information on The Royal College of Surgeons of England and its rules are not fully detailed here but are dealt with in a later.

The second chapter, 'Medicine in Britain', presents an introduction to the NHS and the different types of hospital in the UK. It encourages the overseas doctor to practise a multidisciplinary team approach, explains what constitutes a good team and the consequences of poor teamwork. However, the topic suddenly changes into talking about the British Medical Association, The Royal College of Surgeons of England and the pay banding for doctors. It is difficult to explain about medicine in Britain in 12 pages but we found this chapter informative despite being a little disorganised.

'Career planning' is the best chapter in the book. It describes all the essentials for career planning and choosing a specialty. It also explains the difference between training and non-training posts as well as the different grades in each, information that the overseas doctor will need to understand before coming to the UK.

The section about 'General practice in the UK' stresses the importance of this part of the healthcare system to the NHS and also the career opportunities for overseas doctors wishing to work in the UK as a GP. The pathways into UK general practice are well described, as are the different types of practices. However, the rest of the information is

not detailed enough and the overseas doctor would be best advised to research other sources to gain a full understanding of general practice in the UK.

In the chapter entitled 'Essential paperwork', the authors cover what the overseas doctor should practise while in a hospital post. It is written in a clear and simple way in order to guide them into what the British hospital system expects of them in contrast to what they may be more used to. Topics covered include the doctor-patient relationship, making and taking decisions, clinical record guidelines, referral letters, etc.

'Examinations' is another good chapter and includes many hints on how to prepare for an examination (especially the IELTS, PLAB and MRCS) with sound advice on 'strategies before talent and luck'. It also gives the reader information on each membership examination, including cost, courses, what textbooks to read, pass rate and many other useful tips.

'Hard times' gives the reader an introduction to real life away from home, what to expect and how to face failing exams. It also tackles the very sensitive issue of racism and guides the overseas doctor on how to cope and deal with stress in many ways.

The final chapter, 'Living in Britain', gives broad, general information on living in the UK. It explains about banking, tax, health and money issues, accommodation, transport and entertainment. However, it also contains some unnecessary and not very useful information.

In summary, we thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and were impressed with its content. This book will be invaluable reading for overseas doctors who already work or are considering working in Britain.

Head, Neck and Dental Emergencies

MIKE PERRY

EXTENT P/H	462 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£19.95 019529104
PUBLISHER	Oxford University Press (Oxford), 2005
REVIEWER	John Lowry
STAR RATING	*****

This attractively presented little book is a further addition to the Oxford Handbook series. It is in the pocket reference format with a plastic flexicover to which we have become accustomed since the first *Oxford Handbook of Clinical Medicine* was first published 20 years ago and has matching ribbon page markers in yellow and red.

It aims to provide the reader with a working approach to diagnosis and management of patients presenting in the accident and emergency department, concentrating as would be expected from the title on urgent and emergency problems above the collar bones. However, of necessity, the first three chapters covering general assessment, first aid

measures and infections take a rather more whole body approach, as do the concluding glossary and last two sections on burns and miscellaneous conditions.

The bulk of the book runs sequentially through trauma and other emergency conditions involving the head, neck, face, ears, eyes, mouth and salivary glands. The editor points out that many of the subjects covered are not true emergencies that may immediately threaten life, sight or limb but that, nevertheless, the text endeavours to cover the majority of conditions in the anatomical region for which patients regularly attend the casualty department. On average, one topic within each overall heading is covered over three pages with a system of four icons used throughout, to allow rapid identification of the degree of urgency. The explanatory key to the icons appears helpfully on both the inside front cover and again within the preface.

Emergency care by its very nature should be as simple and as quick as possible. To this end, the layout comprising short notes, diagrams and photographs together with a remarkably comprehensive index provides the reader with an easily assimilated set of information, which should prove extremely valuable in an emergency situation. There is an emphasis on maintaining a high index of suspicion and on frequent re-assessment to ensure that pathology and potential complications are not missed. A minor disappointment was the quality of some of the photographs, the majority of which are in monochrome, that contrasts with those in colour printed on higher quality paper in the chapter devoted to the eye.

The editor, who has extensive experience as a trauma team leader and who is now based in Belfast, has drawn together 14 contributors from a range of surgical specialties, together with ophthalmology and dentistry. The book is recommended mainly for junior doctors and also nurses in accident and emergency, oral and maxillofacial surgery, ENT, ophthalmology, anaesthetics and plastic surgery, as well as for undergraduates. However, it is likely to have wider appeal even to more senior colleagues, who may not regularly deal with emergencies around the head and neck but who occasionally may be called upon to do so.

Medical IELTS: A Workbook for International Doctors and PLAB Candidates

DAVID SALES

EXTENT P/H	208 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£24.95 1857758625
PUBLISHER	Radcliffe (Oxford), 2004
REVIEWER	Marc Patterson
STAR RATING	****

The native English speaker, particularly if monolingual, should be thoroughly humbled by the awesome task which faces many potential colleagues from overseas in acquiring

sufficient English language skills to work in the NHS. Not only is good standard and technical English required to function at all in the medical field, but also a working knowledge of idiomatic language is essential to work proficiently.

This excellent book is designed as a workbook to help prospective international medical graduates and other healthcare workers do just that and is aimed at those studying for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) examinations in particular.

It is divided into two parts, the first dealing with the specifics of vocabulary and language use in the clinical setting and the second written for students sitting the examinations, exploring points of grammar and vocabulary which might be expected in the various papers. These are preceded by an explanation of how to use the book to best advantage, including suggestions for ways to augment vocabulary.

The first part of the book is a comprehensive guide to current language and vocabulary as used in the medical setting. It begins with general chapters on communicating with patients and taking a history, suggesting the most colloquial and succinct ways of posing a question to elicit a useful and accurate response from the patient. Within the history-taking chapter, there is useful information on what occupations like 'being in HR' involve or what a 'chippy' does for a living. Interestingly, it requires four full pages to cover all the terms for alcohol and drug consumption, while exercise needs only a paragraph and includes the term 'couch potato'.

The subsequent chapters within this first section deal with the various systems of the body and include ways in which patients describe their symptoms, how these should be understood by the doctor and ways in which the technical language of medicine can be translated into everyday English for the patient. The emphasis is on the importance of two-way communication between patient and doctor with the patient needing to understand what the doctor is talking about just as much as the doctor needs to understand the patient.

This whole section provides a very useful guide to current language usage in the medical context and would be an invaluable reference book for the puzzled physician to have at hand in the clinic. The only criticism is the lack of an index where one might easily discover, for example, the meaning of 'popping your clogs' or 'brewer's droop' without having to trawl through the entire book to do so.

The second and larger part of the book is a presentation in workbook form of particular language points, topics and vocabulary which might be faced by the candidate facing the IELTS or PLAB examinations. It takes the form of short chapters on a grammatical point (*e.g.* confusing words and false friends) or a theme (*e.g.* politics) and requires very specific answers to be given to the questions posed, often from lists provided. It provides the student with a comprehensive