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

coverage of grammar and vocabulary and requires considerable attention to detail. Answers are provided at the back of the book.

This book is highly recommended for international doctors as an accessible and clear guide to current English usage. It is very readable, well organised and could be used by both examination candidates as a workbook and by practising doctors as a reference guide to the innumerable idioms and colloquial expressions with which their patients may bombard them in the clinic.

Cope's Early Diagnosis of the Acute Abdomen (21st edn)

WILLIAM SILEN

EXTENT P/H	298 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£19.99 0195175468
PUBLISHER	Oxford University Press (Oxford), 2005
REVIEWER	Dominic Slade
STAR RATING	***

Zachary Cope published the first edition of this treatise on the diagnosis of the acute abdomen in 1921. From the outset, he emphasised the importance of personal experience and clinical observation, confirmed frequently by everyday practice in arriving at early and timely diagnoses. Eighty-four years later in this latest edition, Silen has remained true to Cope's key ideology.

The style is somewhat reminiscent of a grand master such as Goligher giving out useful tips gleaned from a lifetime's experience on an imaginary ward round. Unlike Goligher, the text is at times awkward and unnecessarily long-winded. Nevertheless, there is no doubting the author's dedication to his subject, including a description of Cope's own signs and symptoms during an attack of cholecystitis culminating in a laparotomy for a perforated gall bladder!

The book is aimed at the tyro dealing with the unselected general surgical 'take' and would form a useful reference in establishing a clinical diagnosis. Its layout includes the regular lists of differential diagnoses followed by a detailed explanation of how they differ from one another. For example, there is particular detail on how to differentiate intestinal obstruction from other abdominal catastrophes by careful attention to the nature, colour and frequency of vomiting. There are pearls of wisdom even for the experienced clinician and clear descriptions of clinical signs, such as liver resonance in perforated peptic ulceration, and how to determine abdominal pain of thoracic origin. Contained within its 26 chapters, there are useful sections covering the acute abdomen in pregnancy, the immunocompromised, patients

with impaired sensation following injury and operation, as well as a discussion of those conditions that mimic abdominal disease. There are 16 black and white plates, predominantly of plain abdominal films, illustrative of the common conditions described in the text.

This book champions the skills of clinical diagnosis founded on the cornerstones of careful history taking and examination. Both Cope and Silen eschew the modern doctor's reliance on laboratory tests and cross-sectional imaging, constantly stressing that many diagnoses can be arrived at purely through careful attention to detail. This mantra is repeated throughout and bears an important message to all of us lazily reaching for the CT scan request card.

Organisational Development in Healthcare: Approaches, Innovations, Achievements

EDWARD PECK

EXTENT P/H	376 p, paperback
PRICE/ISBN	£35.00 185775896X
PUBLISHER	Radcliffe (Oxford), 2004
REVIEWER	Ron Hopkins
STAR RATING	***

This book is a comprehensive academic study of organisational development with a strong NHS context. It will be a good resource book for staff working in human resources and organisational development. Its academic emphasis and concentration on theory does not produce an easy, everyday read for healthcare professionals who may be looking for simple understanding of organisational development that they can apply to daily practice.

The book is well researched and makes a good attempt to explain, in depth, organisational development from a theoretical and practical background. There are many useful pearls of wisdom scattered throughout and it is well referenced from both an organisational development and an NHS perspective. It would, however, be of benefit to the busy clinical manager to have examples of case studies on how some of the tools can be applied and lessons learned.

The final chapter is good and explains that, due to lack of empirical evidence to support any given methodology, 'no self-respecting academic would nail his view to the mast'.

The book outlines tools and approaches to organisational development that will prove useful but the style and approach in the text requires some tenacity to complete. Nevertheless, such tenacity is rewarded and real benefits can be derived from the book. Perhaps a more condensed and practical version could be produced for wider NHS use?