



education and justice. Part II goes on to tackle the key practice issues: first response, initial assessments, in-depth interviews, indirect and non-verbal approaches, and advice for parents and carers.

The Epilogue provides a framework from which to consider information, helping us all to adopt and maintain a systematic approach to this important field of work and to our future thinking and training developments.

The general principles of the 'how to' communicate with children is applicable beyond the legislative framework of England and Wales.

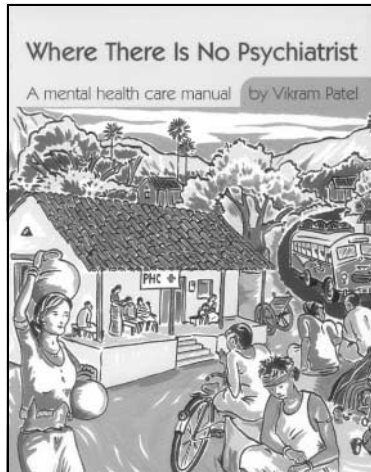
David Jones has given us a 'must read practical' resource book, to help us to undertake one of the most challenging tasks of our working lives, communicating with maltreated children.

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Where There is No Psychiatrist: A Mental Health Care Manual

Vikram Patel

London: Gaskell, 2003, £8.00 pb, 288 pp., ISBN: 1-901242-75-7



When I learnt that this book was in preparation, the immediate question I asked was, 'Why has it taken so long for such a book to be written?' It was a quarter of a century ago when David Werner's book, *Where there is no Doctor*, came out. In a few years, the book had become a household name in many low-income countries. The book served as a reference text for health workers and lay people, and many families kept a copy for their own use. The book enabled ordinary people to understand common diseases and empowered them to 'do something' rather than watch helplessly as the patient

suffered. It was often the only source of help for a teacher in a boarding school in a rural area, miles from the nearest health centre, when a pupil became sick in the middle of the night and there was no telephone or transport.

Can *Where there is no Psychiatrist* fulfil a similar role? I think this is what the author had in mind. The need for a simple manual, which could help rural health workers to recognise and manage common mental disorders, has been apparent for many years. During the past few decades, there has been increasing awareness of the magnitude of mental health problems and their impact on individuals, families and communities. Attitudes towards mental illness have also changed, with more people coming forward for treatment. Despite this positive development, access to mental health care in low-income countries is still extremely poor and there is a serious shortage of mental health care workers. However, most of these countries have large numbers of community workers who could be deployed to deliver mental health care if they had the necessary knowledge and skills. *Where there is no Psychiatrist* might go some way in providing such knowledge and skills.

The book is divided into four sections. Section one gives an overview of mental disorders, their assessment and management. Here, the author attempts to explain the concept of mental illness, particularly non-psychotic conditions, in simple terms that can be understood in cultures where mental illness is often equated with psychosis, and depression and anxiety are not recognised as mental disorders. The use of many illustrations and case histories is extremely helpful.

Section two describes specific clinical syndromes ranging from the traditionally recognised psychotic and non-psychotic conditions to emerging problems, such as HIV/AIDS, domestic violence and abuse.

Section three deals with the challenging problem of integrating mental health care into other sectors. Integration is a major determining factor in success or failure in the delivery of mental health care by primary health care workers. The issues of prevention and mental health promotion are also adequately treated here.

The final section focuses on drugs for the treatment of mental disorders. The drugs chosen are similar to those in the World Health Organization list of essential drugs for primary health care. Information on resources available in the community and how to use them, the flow chart to aid diagnosis and the management of common conditions, is also described.

So, will this book fulfil a similar role to *Where there is no Doctor*? My personal answer is yes but, time will tell. Many users of the book may require some training.

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Insomnia Principles and Management

Martin P. Szuba, Jacqueline D. Kloss & David F. Dinges (eds)
Cambridge University Press, 2003,
£36 pb, 288 pp., ISBN: 0521010764

Although published by Cambridge University Press, this is a largely American multi-contributor production, with the exception of one chapter author from Brazil and three from Canada. For all that, the book is an impressive 'teaching text', taking the reader from the basics to current thinking on insomnia in terms of neurotransmitters and the role of brain structures such as the amygdala in the modulation of arousal.

The subject matter gives practical advice to the clinician trying to manage insomnia in the out-patient department setting, with occasional clinical case illustrations in the body of the text, but also appendices devoted to practical scripts on 'sleep hygiene', 'sleep-restriction' and 'stimulus-control'. There will not be many general clinicians who have not struggled to help the persistent complainer of poor sleep. This book gives some of the tools on how to try and help with this problem rationally.

The book demystifies much of the terminology of the sleep disorders specialty. The authors give a clear account of topics such as insomnia due to circadian rhythm disturbances, and the use of hypnotic medications, including melatonin.

The pharmacology of the newer hypnotics (zopiclone, zolpidem, zaleplon) finds a place for discussion, but critically, lacks bite and detail. These drugs are clumped together as 'non-benzodiazepine sedatives', but there is clearly more to be said here that is not (e.g. structural differences from the benzodiazepines, interaction with the GABA-A receptor, or benzodiazepine-1 receptor). There is, however, in compensation a useful discussion on dependence risk which will be of interest particularly to prescribers of these drugs.

The book is attractively-covered, handily-sized, light to carry, and packs in an amazing amount into 285 pages (and the print size is not too small either). The book is sparse in terms of illustrations and tables, but generally, and especially given its multi-contributor format, reads clearly and fluently. Each chapter is extremely well-referenced with up-to-date references. A table of abbreviations (given that there are a lot) and their meanings is