through which he developed a deep understanding of both undergraduate and postgraduate medical education.

Why is the book so good? It is a practical book. It includes all the areas a teacher in general practice would want to explore. The implications of teaching for a practice are defined effectively with an appropriate emphasis on the need for protected time. It starts with a well-constructed outline of basic medical education theory for both the curriculum and assessment. The reader is then led through a series of pragmatic and sound teaching approaches where good practical advice abounds. The organization of teaching within the practice, implications of students sitting in, one to one tutorials, small group and feedback methods using projects, audits and video-recording are all covered comprehensively. The final chapter is about evaluation, and the journey is complete.

The text is clear, concise and well laid out. The book has plenty of clear illustrations and examples, which makes reading it a pleasure. I particularly liked the diagrams—a jigsaw puzzle demonstrates the move from hypothetico-deductive reasoning to pattern recognition and expertise. I found less useful the examples of conversations between teachers and students. References are up to date and comprehensive. Of particular help is the guide to the galaxy of educational jargon and the reading list for each chapter, with a thumbnail comment on each recommendation.

Dr Hays clearly has a deep, well-researched understanding of his subject. The book is a joy to delve into and inspires one to read more. He is to be congratulated on his understanding of the subject and the clarity with which he has shared it.

VALERIE WASS
Senior Lecturer, Department of General Practice, Guy's, King's & St Thomas' School of Medicine, London


Genetics is a new science, and here is a book that is all about it written by a GP and a consultant in clinical genetics. It consists of three sections (basic, clinical and primary care perspectives on genetics) each containing half a dozen chapters. In addition, there are four appendices. The potential that genetics has for identifying, clarifying, even modifying gene-based disorders lends excitement to the whole arena. For GPs, the well-read patient may know more about it than we do. So buy this book.

While there is plenty of technical information (Chapter 8, for example, contains information on 12 different disorders), it gives the impression of being ‘lighter’, perhaps something to do with the diagrams, case histories, information sheets and exercises. At the beginning there is a sensible chapter on genetic counseling containing information on different health models. The last section contains chapters on organization of health care in general practice, the primary–secondary care divide, and screening for genetic disorders—all very necessary and professionally written.

I am rather impressed with the book as a whole. It should do well in rapidly expanding primary care and be useful for all the various health care workers who are expected to work in the community. If I was to criticize it, albeit churlishly, it would be that discussion of the patients' perspective is a mere seven pages long. It is clearly up-to-date, with web site addresses listed towards the back (did you know the RCGP has a genetic web site forum?). If you don't read it cover to cover, you will want it to hand for those consultations which start “Good morning doctor, I’m here to talk about my brother in Australia who has syndrome xyz, and his doctor has said that I need to be checked out . . .”

I have to admit that genetics intimidates me—yet this book de-mystifies it and makes sense of it all. It is well written, clearly organized, cross-referenced and gives the illusion that it is not too academic. Overall an excellent text.

SU RINDER SINGH
Lecturer and Principal in GP, Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, London


This is a soft-bound book with glazed paper covers and is aimed primarily at GPs who wish to have a deeper knowledge of occupational health and of the large raft of new legislation that has accompanied, supported and complicated it during the last 25 years. The text is structured so that there are also parts that are of relevance and of interest to practice nurses and practice managers.

The content and layout are closely linked to the Staffordshire University Distance Learning Course, for which access details are given in the book. Each chapter has at its end a set of ‘Reflection exercises’ which the reader is invited to work through. The book has useful chapters on the relationship of work to health and of health to work, fitness for work, ethics and confidentiality in occupational health practice. There is also an important one I had not seen previously, a chapter on occupational health and safety concerns for GPs and their staff. This touches on general health and safety management, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations.

This book describes the variety of statistics routinely available about health and health care, and discusses how to access and use them. To turn what is essentially a listing of statistical sources into a readable and enjoyable book is quite a challenge—but the editor and contributing authors have shown that it can be done. A nyone with an interest in the nation’s health will find this a fascinating and invaluable guide.

M ost of the chapters relate to a particular source from which data can be obtained, for instance the Office of National Statistics, the Cancer Registries or the UK Data Archive. Other chapters focus on a specific health topic, such as primary care, or birth and maternity. The contributing authors are all specialists with close personal knowledge of the statistics being described, and—with a few exceptions—they demonstrate how even an apparently dry and technical subject like compiling health statistics can come alive in the hands of real enthusiasts. Inevitably, there is some overlap in material between different chapters, but there is ample cross-referencing, and the excellent index allows one to keep track of all mentions of a particular item. M ost usefully, there are contact details, including web site addresses, for all the sources of publicly available data listed. In many cases, some typical uses of the data are presented.

The most absorbing chapters take the reader right to the heart of the primary data collection, with its inevitable messy aspects. A nyone with experience of routine data collection will know the difficulties of maintaining standards and, in general, the shortcomings and inadequacies of the data are made explicit. It is clear that some official statistics are seriously out of date by the time of publication, are incomplete in detail and geographical coverage, or may be difficult to interpret.

In recent years, the government’s energetic setting of health targets has increased the call for routine official statistics. While it is impressive that such a wide range of health information is being collected every day, history suggests that much of it will remain unused, to obsolesce into outdated and inaccessible data files. By raising awareness of the information that exists, and encouraging its access, this book may help to ensure that it is used more effectively. O therwise there is a danger that the data will simply serve to demonstrate, with increasing clarity, that social and regional inequalities in health continue to get worse.

PAT YUDKIN
University Lecturer in Medical Statistics in the Department of Primary Health Care, University of Oxford


The authors of this book about glaucoma are experienced and respected in the field and provide an excellent insight into modern management problems that arise. Primary open angle glaucoma is covered in great detail. Subsequent chapters deal with the epidemiology, population screening issues and genetic screening for the disease. W hole chapters are devoted to the optic disc features of glaucoma, perimetry and understanding intraocular pressure. The text is easy to read and peppered with useful graphs and illustrations. A number of chapters have particularly well presented tables that help present a large amount of information succinctly.

There is a thorough review of the treatment options for glaucoma including a very useful, well-balanced chapter which considers the principles of treating glaucoma patients. R esults of important clinical trials are included to update the reader with the latest research in the field.

A lthough the book devotes its greater part to primary open angle glaucoma, angle closure glaucoma is also covered in some detail, including its classification, clinical features, epidemiology and management. The childhood glaucomas and secondary glaucomas are also...