Chapter 6, “Pseudo-Outbreaks Reported in Health Care Settings,” discusses causes of pseudo-outbreaks, including the failure to verify the diagnosis or the existence of an outbreak. Chapter 7, “Organisms and Diseases Associated with Outbreaks in a Variety of Health Care Settings,” discusses outbreaks attributable to the organisms methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus, M. tuberculosis, and Clostridium difficile, to parasitic diseases such as scabies, and to disease syndromes. For each, there is discussion about transmission and prevention. Unfortunately, there is no information presented about other multidrug-resistant organisms that cause health care–associated infections, such as extended spectrum β-lactamase–producing gram-negative bacteria.

Chapter 8, “Investigation, Prevention, and Control of Outbreaks in the Health Care Setting,” details guidelines for recognizing, investigating, collecting, and evaluating outbreak data; formulating a hypothesis; and instituting control measures. There is a brief discussion on coordinating with public health departments, developing emergency plans, and reporting to required governmental agencies.

The final 4 chapters discuss information technology, statistical methods, the role of the laboratory, and models for collecting, organizing, and displaying epidemiological data. The author vividly shows her own use of information technology in the wealth of information contained in this book. The statistical chapter, coauthored with Deborah Y. Phillips, provides easy-to-understand information about descriptive and inferential statistics, analytic studies, and interpretation of results.

The strength of this book as a reference is the extensive information, presented in a concise form, on outbreak investigation, prevention, and control in various types of health care settings. This is also a deficit to the extent that certain information is missing and the writing style is sometimes pedantic. Minimal information is presented about types of isolation precautions, newer organisms, and catheter-associated bloodstream infection, ventilator-associated pneumonia, and Foley catheter–associated urinary tract infection, except when mentioned in relation to outbreaks. This book is a good reference for infection control professionals and physicians to use as a preliminary guideline for outbreak investigation, prevention, and control.

Miriam L. Cameron
Infectious Diseases and Infection Control, Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic, Washington, DC

Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 19th Edition
Edited by David L. Heymann

As the recent outbreak of Mexican H1N1 influenza virus has so clearly demonstrated, the unpredictable field of communicable diseases is ever evolving, and the spread of infectious disease remains a global public health threat. An emerging communicable disease in one part of the world can quickly affect the entire world’s population. Moreover, communicable diseases remain a leading cause of mortality and morbidity around the world. Health care professionals working in this fast moving environment need guidance to rely on, to remain up to date with the most recent information and to face the numerous challenges. For >90 years now, the Control of Communicable Diseases Manual has proven to be an indispensable key source of succinct, reliable, up-to-date, evidence-based information on both well known and recently emerged infectious diseases.

This 19th edition, published by the American Public Health Association, is the latest asset to this long tradition. Its editor, David L. Heymann, is the right man to manage this book for the second time in a row, as his long career exhibits his dedication to disease control to this day. Currently the Assistant Director-General for Health Security and Environment of the World Health Organization (WHO) and Representative of the Director-General for Polio Eradication, Dr Heymann is one of the most important communicable disease control experts in the world. Before joining WHO, Dr Heymann worked for 13 years as a medical epidemiologist in sub-Saharan Africa. He directed the international response to the Ebola outbreak in Kikwit in 1995. Under his guidance, an impressive group of experts in communicable diseases and public health from around the world (most working for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and WHO) has gathered to write, review and edit this book, ensuring global relevance of the information provided.

As all previous editions, Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 19th Edition has a clear, well organized format that provides easy-to-read, succinct information. Diseases are listed in alphabetical order, and each disease is described in the same format, covering identification, infectious agent, occurrence, reservoir, mode of transmission, incubation period, susceptibility, period of communicability, and methods of control. Were applicable, useful references to sources for more extensive information are provided. Because of its concise format, the book is extremely valuable for anyone working in the field who needs a quick, yet comprehensive overview of a particular disease.

This 19th edition starts with a 70-page update including 11 new chapters, covering topics relevant to the ever changing needs in the global public health landscape. Various new fields of interest are extensively discussed, such as reporting of communicable diseases, infection control and antimicrobial resistance, risk assessment, management and communication during an outbreak, outbreak response in
bioterrorism, practical guidance for infectious disease control during mass gatherings and humanitarian emergency situations, and handling of infectious materials.

This edition includes guidance on controlling a total of 136 infectious diseases. The chapters on the 6 leading infectious causes of mortality in low income countries (diarrhea, acute respiratory infection, malaria, measles, AIDS, and tuberculosis), responsible for a staggering 46% of all deaths in these regions, have been updated to comply with the most recent prevention and treatment strategies. Much attention is also given to emerging and re-emerging infections. New disease variants are included, and some chapters have been entirely reworked. For example, the chapter on influenza was updated with separate sections for seasonal influenza and human influenza of animal origin (eg, covering the avian influenza [H5N1] outbreak in Asia).

In conclusion, this 19th edition is a worthy update of an excellent reference work that ensures its relevance and usefulness to every student, public health professional, and clinician or caretaker working in the field of communicable disease around the world. It is compact, up-to-date, well-structured, and concise without being minimal and provides all the relevant information you need when facing a particular problem related to communicable diseases.

Robert L. Colebunders
Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp Clinical Sciences, Antwerpen, Belgium