Physical Rehabilitation: Evidence-Based Examination, Evaluation, and Intervention

The editors’ goal for this book was to develop a broad-based text that utilizes the structure and language of the Guide to Physical Therapist Practice (Guide), and makes specific evidence-based recommendations for treatment. It is intended for use by physical therapist students and practicing clinicians.

The book’s first chapter reviews physical rehabilitation, disablement models, and the Guide, and discusses the organization of the book and how it relates to the Guide. The second chapter describes evidence-based practice. The book is divided into 5 color-coded parts. The first 4 parts cover the 4 categories of practice patterns in the Guide: musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, cardiovascular/pulmonary, and integumentary. The fifth part covers material that is applicable to all areas of physical therapy, such as gait assessment, assistive devices, orthotics, and community mobility.

Chapters within each part of the book describe various disorders of that system. In reviewing disorders, each chapter follows a preferred practice pattern of the Guide. The chapter begins with an outline and a list of learning objectives for that topic. It then reviews the description and pathology for each diagnosis. These opening sections have wonderful summaries of information in tabular or illustrative format. The chapter then describes the examination of a patient with this particular diagnosis. Any procedures that are not considered to be routine are illustrated with photographs and diagrams. Evaluation, prognosis, and diagnosis are described next. The intervention sections describe treatment strategies that have been shown to be the most efficacious for that diagnosis. The concepts presented in each chapter are reinforced through the use of 1 or 2 case studies that follow the same format of examination, evaluation, prognosis, diagnosis, and intervention. Each chapter concludes with a summary, a list of additional resources, a glossary, and extensive references to specific studies to support treatment options.

The only part that does not follow this format is part 5—“Interventions Common to Many Conditions Requiring Rehabilitation.” This part does reference the chapter on pediatric nonprogressive central nervous system disorders for potential interventions. However, cerebral palsy and myelomeningocele are the only 2 diagnoses covered in that chapter. And, although those 2 topics are covered well, instructors in pediatrics will want to supplement this text.

By utilizing the Guide as a blueprint for its topics, the editors have ensured that all areas of practice in physical therapy have been addressed. The repetition of the evaluation and treatment process for each practice pattern should help the student grasp the process more easily. The consistency of the format throughout the book makes it an easy reference tool for clinicians.

The accompanying CD-ROM is excellent and reinforces the material presented in the text. It is easy to follow, with a main screen containing topics and a dropdown screen referring to the chapter and practice pattern. The additional material in the CD-ROM includes animations, additional case studies, forms, references, study questions, vocabulary exercises, and Web sites. The animations will be particularly helpful for those students who have difficulty visualizing neuroanatomy or radiographs. There are 1 or 2 additional case studies presented for most chapters, except for those covering the topics of pediatrics, vital signs, neuropathic ulcers, and gait. Case studies are all presented in a consistent format, although some are more detailed than others, with illustrations, photographs, and sample home exercise sheets.

Most of the case studies could be improved by providing more of these representations for students. The study questions and vocabulary exercises for each chapter are comprehensive.

I highly recommend this text for use in a physical therapy course, or as a reference text in a physical therapy clinic. Educators and students will appreciate the text’s structure, clarity, and accompanying materials. It is a gem of a text. I wish it could have been available when I was in school.

Carolyn Vaillancourt
C Vaillancourt PT, NCS, is a senior clinician at Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital Pediatric Center in Braintree, Massachusetts.