The primary aim of *The Oxford Textbook of Clinical Research Ethics* is ‘to create a comprehensive and systematic synthesis of all the literature relevant to the ethics of clinical research, broadly construed’. In this, the editors, all from the US National Institutes of Health, have been largely successful. The book’s 73 chapters, set out in 11 sections, are written by experts drawn internationally, with many of the 87 contributors being recognized leaders in the fields of medical and research ethics.

The book is organized in a logical sequence beginning with a selected examination of historical events and a section devoted to ‘codes, declarations, and other ethical guidance’. These are followed by seven sections covering scientific design issues (including risk-benefit assessments and participant selection); independent ethical review and oversight; and informed consent. The final two sections of the book, which are of particular interest and current relevance, cover multinational research and investigator behaviour, the latter including discussions of conflicts of interest and scientific misconduct. Within these sections, each chapter includes a list of references to support the text and provide interested readers with a base for further exploration of the subject under discussion.

The book is aimed at ‘physicians, students, and scholars interested in research with human subjects’, but it is also an important training resource for those already conducting clinical research as investigators (or those contemplating becoming investigators), as well as for researchers, ethics committee members, sponsors, research advocacy groups and regulators. The editing ensures that the text is comprehensible for both clinical researchers and generalist lay readers, and the book can either be read from cover to cover or individual sections/chapters can be used as a springboard to more detailed examination of the issues involved in ‘research ethics’.

Overall, the authors have achieved their goals—comprehensiveness, systematic analysis and wide ranging and international perspectives—providing a valuable resource for all those interested and involved in research. For occupational health professionals, it is a book that should be accessible on the library shelf.

**Rating**

★★☆☆ (Reference only)

Roger Rawbone

Knowledge of discrimination law, particularly disability discrimination, is crucial for occupational health (OH) professionals delivering vocational rehabilitation services effectively.

The book’s authors are well placed to comment on this important area.
Professor Diana Kloss MBE is a barrister, former employment judge and honorary senior lecturer in occupational health law at the University of Manchester. She is the author of *Occupational Health Law* (5th edition, Wiley Blackwell, 2010) and is a visiting professor at London South Bank University. Dr John Ballard has written on occupational health matters for over 20 years. He edits the *Occupational Health [at Work]* journal and is a director of The At Work Partnership. He is an honorary fellow of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine.

This book is a practical guide to discrimination law and the implications it has for OH practice. It strives for comprehensive, reliable and authoritative explanations of discrimination law from five OH health legal authorities. It is well written and well researched for jobbing OH practitioners involved in disability, absence and rehabilitation case management and also for human resources and health and safety practitioners.

The book has 10 chapters preceded by useful tables of relevant cases, statutes and statutory instruments. The introduction provides historical and sociological context to the development of discrimination law in the UK and the wider influences from Europe and the US civil rights movement. Chapters are dedicated to exploring the Equality Act, discrimination in relation to disability, health screening, sex/gender reassignment, age and race/religion/belief. The final two chapters explain in detail how employment tribunals work and provide an A–Z guide to the Equality Act 2010.

There are clear summaries of the law and illustrative case examples. The practical implications for OH specialists and line managers are well set out. There are a number of references to surveys from the At Work Group, which may need supplementation by further scientifically valid data in some areas.

Controversial areas include a role for OH services in ascertaining employee carer responsibilities for disability discrimination by association/perception purposes. Likewise can personality tests be used as an objective measure of ability to do the job or are they ‘medical tests’ used potentially to weed out those with mental health disabilities? It is suggested that military recruits with asymptomatic HIV infection are not impaired to function as soldiers and present minimal infection risks to colleagues from medical treatment or first aid [1]. The risk-based issues of managing disease or injury while serving in hostile conditions are not fully considered. Also inconsistencies when safety conflicts with religious or disability needs of the employees, such as Sikhs being excused wearing hard hats on construction sites [2], yet not in steel mills [3] or strict requirements to wearing steel toe capped boots in warehouses [4], are not explored.

This is a useful reference for OH practitioners and represents reasonable value for money.

**Rating**

★★★✩ (Buy and keep)

Peter Noone

**References**


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**Occupational Health Services: A Practical Approach**


This book has been produced by a collaboration of authors who work in a number of different departments in the USA and Canada. Contributors include the vice president for health, safety, environment and sustainability, Medical Advisory Services, Maryland and the medical director of the Occupational Medicine Division, of Workplace Medical Corps in Canada. All the authors have significant experience in the practical delivery of occupational health care, academic practice, corporate delivery of services and community-based services. This book is aimed at a North American (US and Canadian)