

before they are registered with the Dental Board of Australia. Overseas trained dentists must pass the Australian Dental Council exams before registration and there is a strong expectation that candidates for these exams will have thorough knowledge of the accepted best therapeutic practice for dentistry as outlined in Therapeutic Guidelines. Without full knowledge of these guidelines it would be extremely unlikely that candidates would pass these very difficult exams.

The Australian Dental Association is very concerned about all rural and remote practising dentists and in particular

those trained overseas. It runs an excellent professional development program targeting remote dentists. The program is delivered via the internet as 'webinars' which are generally held in the early evening to have least disturbance to clinical practice. The most recent webinars were extremely well attended (over 70 participants). This service is free and all dentists, particularly overseas trained dentists working in remote regions of Australia where professional interaction is more difficult, should be encouraged to join the Australian Dental Association and access these services.

Book reviews

Nursing Spectrum Drug Handbook

Schull PD. New York: McGraw-Hill; 2010. 1376 pages. \$48.

Nurse's Pocket Drug Guide

Barberio JA. New York: McGraw-Hill; 2010. 409 pages. \$20.

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These books aim to provide comprehensive detail for nurses about a wide range of medications to ensure safe prescription and administration. They contain a lot of information, but it has a North American focus.

The Handbook has comprehensive details, and as a resource intended for nurses the included sections titled 'Administration', 'Patient monitoring' and 'Patient education' focus heavily on the nursing responsibilities of medication management and are a strength of the text.

The content has a section on 'Safe drug administration', which includes a range of useful resources, the majority of which will serve as a quick reference guide before administering a drug. This includes lists of drug compatibilities (for the purposes of administration), conversions and calculations, similar sounding drug names that are easily confused, tablets and capsules that should not be crushed, and the management of poisonings. Other resources included in this section may serve as an education tool rather than a quick reference, such as 'Identifying injection sites' and 'Preventing and treating extravasation'.

There are, however, some omissions in the Handbook, most notably paediatric indications and doses for a number of medications. No pharmacokinetic data are offered, which is a significant limitation of the book.

The Pocket guide presents the 'most frequently used' and 'clinically important' medications. It includes over 1000 medications so there are few significant oversights. There is also a brief section detailing some commonly used herbal medicines. There are some useful summary tables of varying preparations of the same drug (for example paracetamol), similar drugs frequently interchanged or of escalating potency or duration of action (for example steroids, insulins, local anaesthetics) and sound-alike drug names.

The value of the books is limited for Australian nurses by differing drug names, dosing schedules and different treatment practices between Australia and the USA. For example, adrenaline is referred to as epinephrine and is recommended as a treatment for asthma while salbutamol is not included in the book.

As with many pocket books the Guide is slightly larger than some handheld devices, while the content is more limited and is missing the functionality of an electronic resource. The conservation of space has resulted in some sections being difficult to follow because of the extensive use of abbreviations, symbols and brief point form. Furthermore, use of a very small font with few spaces has resulted in a very crowded looking text where detailed entries can be difficult to read. Other than price, the pocket guide is not likely to compare favourably with a handheld device.

The Handbook is supplemented with online resources which include software to download a full-text version for use on a handheld device. With increasing use of smartphones and other handheld devices, textbooks which make a version available for these media have a distinct advantage over texts which are only available in hard copy. The availability of a handheld device version may sway nurses to purchase this text over others. However, these features may not persuade those looking for an Australian reference or for more comprehensive pharmacokinetics.