This very welcome third edition of Control of Hospital Infection: A Practical Handbook has been awaited by infection control nurses and microbiologists who are very familiar with the previous editions, which are standard reference books.

Many events have occurred during the ten years since the last edition which have had an impact on the control of infection in hospital, not least the emergence of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. With the addition of only 60 pages, however, the book has been brought up to date with recent advances, and includes excellent references.

It is pleasing to see that control of viral hepatitis and HIV are included in the same chapter, since hepatitis B is transmitted more easily than HIV. Sensible and practicable precautions are given for caring for patients with these infections, whereas elsewhere many confusing and unnecessarily strict recommendations and overuse of protective clothing are advocated.

This can prove to be expensive and extremely unpleasant for the patient. Hepatitis A, B and non-A non-B graduated to become hepatitis A, B, C, D and E, and these are clarified. I believe that F is on the horizon.

The text clearly explains legislation relating to infection control and recommendations as well as the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations: catering, laundry and disposal of waste.

The authors certainly fulfilled their aims in offering guidance on the information needed for a more effective use of current knowledge in ways of controlling infection. It contains sound practical advice not only for doctors and nurses but all health-care workers. Glenys Griffiths RGN, Senior Nurse, Infection Control.

Pressure Sores Video Lectures

Cassette 1 Prevention,
J Robertson
Cassette 2 Woundcare,
R Nicholls
Dave Knowles Films 60mins approx £35.00 pack

The video lecture package, sponsored by Britcare, consists of taped interviews with two recognised experts in the field of pressure sore prevention and treatment by Mr F Tovey, OBE, ChM, FRCS.

Prevention shows Dr James Robertson, consultant in rheumatology and rehabilitation, Salisbury, being interviewed on the topic of pressure sore prevention and treatment; this is complemented in Woundcare by Rosemary Nicholls, clinical tutor, Salisbury, offering her expertise on this topic. Each video lasts approximately 25 minutes.

There is an information sheet included which suggests that Prevention is suitable for use as a group lecture or individual study. A helpful inclusion is the list of references for further study and addresses of companies for information about products.

Information about two high-profile, widely researched and extensively discussed topics is presented and supported with illustrations.

Dr Robertson’s presentation is clear and concise and covers a vast amount of information. The case study approach (orthopaedic patient with a fractured neck of femur) serves as a useful reminder to carers of the importance of prevention from the time of injury to discharge. Reference is made to the Neumark-Macclesfield system but, unfortunately, not elaborated upon.

In the discussion about risk assessment - no mention is made of the importance of combining clinical judgement with risk assessment – resources are obviously limited.

The illustrations in each video could be improved in both quality and number; this would allow better use of the medium of video. How old is that Clinitron air-fluidised unit?

Information about wound types and appropriate dressing choices would also be enhanced by actual examples of dressings matched to wounds. This may also help to clarify some of the terminology used which is not always clear and accurate.

Overall, two difficult topics to discuss satisfactorily, whether on video or face-to-face, due to the vast amount of new knowledge available.

One could always criticise what has been omitted. Maureen Benbow RGN, BA Nursing Education.