The Biological Basis of Mental Health (Third edition)

For some time this text has been the most readable and comprehensive volume covering the biological underpinnings of a wide range of mental health and neuropsychiatric disorders.

This third edition updates and expands the author’s previous work and provides an ideal introduction to nurses and nursing students seeking to develop their understanding of human development and behaviour encountered in clinical practice.

The author provides very clear and easy to understand explanations of both normal and altered physiology, covering a wide range of developmental disorders and dementias. He defines his terms as he goes along and does not assume that the reader has a sophisticated understanding of biology.

The work opens with useful introductory chapters on the brain covering development, neural communication, neurotransmitters and receptors, and hormones and behaviour.

It then covers genetic disorders affecting mental health, pharmacology and drug abuse before focusing on specific conditions such as schizophrenia, affective and anxiety disorders, epilepsy and the dementias.

This new edition incorporates many findings from the fast moving field of molecular biology which is beginning to transform our understanding of these conditions. It is a highly recommended text.


Reviewed by Nigel Wellman, senior lecturer in mental health nursing, Oxford Brookes University

Emergency Nursing at a Glance

This is an excellent resource for emergency nurses of all levels. It highlights common presentations to the emergency department (ED) from wounds to poisoning to cardiac arrests.

It focuses on how to assess patients, discuss appropriate investigations and provide rationales for treatments.

The publication provides several visual aids and the information is up to date, although I did notice that it gives advice for treating COPD patients that differs from British Thoracic Society advice to administer 24% oxygen via venturi mask rather than 28% to achieve target saturations of 88–92%.

The book is aimed at nurses although some of it may be too advanced for those who are new to the ED, but it can be used as a reference in their continuing career. The material is likely to prepare nurses for further study in areas such as advanced life support or trauma.

I am unaware of any similar resource available for emergency nurses. It should be mandatory reading for all nurses starting a career in the ED.


Reviewed by Jenny Jenkins, associate lecturer, University of Salford and advanced practitioner in emergency medicine

Dermofit

Developed by staff and students at Leeds Beckett University, this app aims to train clinical nurses and dermatology specialist nurses to detect skin cancer by identifying malignant and benign skin lesions and growths at an earlier stage.

The app features four sections. Lesion search identifies lesion types and helps users understand the differences. The library search function is a reference library containing 1,000 skin lesions. The tutorial is useful, allowing users to test their ability to identify specific lesions by referring to the Dermofit image library.

The app is a medical training aid and it is not intended for use as a diagnostic tool. Moreover, as it is £25, it may be expensive for personal use and more likely to be bought by institutions.

At present, it is only available on iPad but may be available on Android and iPhones in future.

Requires iOS 8.0 or later. Compatible with iPad.

Reviewed by Layla Haidrani