

Book Reviews

Treatment Planning for the Developing Dentition. Helen Rodd & Alyson Wray. Quintessence Publishing Co. Ltd. ISBN 1-85097-081-5. Price £28

This publication is number 26 of 50 volumes which will eventually comprise the Quintessentials of Dental Practice series and which cover "basic principles and key issues in all aspects of modern dental medicine" in 9 principal topic sections.

Although treatment planning is the cornerstone to appropriate and effective dental care for all ages, managing the developing child and its developing dentition can be a particular challenge. Treatment planning is an important key clinical skill but has relatively few pages devoted to it in many textbooks. Therefore a book which provides such a fully comprehensive approach to treatment planning for children is rare and most welcome.

"Treatment Planning for the Developing Dentition" is the third book to be published in the Paediatric/Orthodontics section, the other two being Child Taming; How to Cope with Children in Dental Practice and Paediatric Cariology.

The series is aimed at busy general dental practitioners and this book focuses on the key principles of comprehensive treatment planning and good decision-making to optimise elective and emergency dental care for children.

The book is divided into 6 chapters, starting with the first visit and information gathering, followed by interceptive orthodontic treatment, planning for prevention, the restorative phase of treatment, management of the dental emergency and finishing with recall strategy. Good quality colour illustrations and extensive tables complement the text, although the format of some tables does not always suit the small portrait layout of the book.

That the book manages to deliver such a comprehensive guide to good treatment planning for children is testament

to the writing style adopted by the authors which makes the text easy to read and the chapter layouts with their stated aims and objectives are useful aids. The only criticism of this excellent publication is that the book tries to cover a little too much and there are some areas of overlap with the Paediatric Cariology volume of the series, particularly in relation to the preventive and restorative phases of treatment planning. While this is partly inevitable when delivering a series of books and is obviously preferable to areas of omission, there are some areas of the book where more in-depth coverage would have been useful. For example, in the chapter on interceptive orthodontics, treatment planning when involving teeth of poor prognosis in both the primary and permanent dentition can be an area of particular difficulty for the non-specialist.

Identifying, responding to, and monitoring a child's level of caries risk is an important skill which has to be used effectively when planning preventive and recall strategies. In Chapter 1, caries risk assessment factors are introduced under clinical, social and behavioural and developmental headings and explored through three sample treatment plans. An extension of this section with listings for high and low caries risk categories based on these factors, cross-referenced with Chapter 3 would have been useful especially as high and low caries risk categories are used extensively in the literature and often form the basis for targeting of preventive therapies (BSPD 1997).

This is a very well-written book which general dental practitioners will find useful to have on their book shelves. It will also be a very useful text for undergraduates and postgraduates, although its relatively high cost may confine it to the reference section.

Anne Maguire

Communicating in Dental Practice: Stress-Free Dentistry and Improving Patient care. R Freeman, G Humphris. Quintessence Publishing Co. Ltd. ISBN 1-85097-099-8. Price £28

Considering the importance of effective communication in the dental practice, there are few books dedicated to the subject. Many of the problems that dentists face often relate to staff and patient interactions including difficult and demanding patients, dentally anxious patients and patients with special needs. Informing and advising patients and motivating patients to change their behaviour regarding their oral health is another key challenge that faces dental health professionals. It is accepted that occupational stress is a common phenomenon and the authors suggest that effective communication could alleviate much of this stress. The aim of the book is to give principles and actions that

will support effective communication with patients. There are three main sections to this book: communication, patients and dental health education in practice.

Basic communication skills and advanced communication skills which are required when gaining consent, breaking bad news and handling complaints are dealt with in the first two chapters. Then there is a chapter dedicated to understanding how communication skills may be modified to match the requirements of patients with special dental needs.

The second section focusing on the patient explains the major factors responsible for patients becoming dentally anxious, describes the various methods of assessing dental anxiety and covers a number of behavioural management techniques for these patients. There is also a chapter specifically aimed to provide the reader with an understanding of patients often described as the “difficult” or dissatisfied patient. It explains what is meant by the treatment alliance and gives a decision-making framework with regard to the management of these patients.

The different definitions and categories of oral health education and prevention, why oral health education is important for practice and models of health behaviour to help establish a preventive outlook and promote oral health for patients are comprehensively covered in the third section.

There is a whole chapter of the book concentrating on occupational stress. The authors advocate self-assessment to recognise potential sources of stress and suggest coping mechanisms thereby enabling practitioners with a means to reducing stress and preventing the condition of burn out or other stress related problems such as alcohol or drug dependency, coronary heart disease, etc.

This book is well designed with clear aims and outcomes at the beginning of each chapter. The presentation of the text is enhanced with useful questionnaires, tables and flow charts which help support the subject being covered. In addition to the normal references to published papers and books, the authors have included valuable website references and telephone help line numbers. Although the theories of recognised psychological and sociological principles are described, the emphasis is on the application of these principles to the day-to-day working of the dental practitioner.

This is a useful addition to the series of books for General Dental Practitioners from Quintessentials. It has been succinctly written, with just over 100 pages, and provides great insight into key communication skills and techniques of special relevance to the dental team.

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