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BOOK REVIEW

Book Review: Oxford American Handbook of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and Supportive Care

Rakesh Garg*

Dr BRAIRCH, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi-110029, India

The Second edition of the book “*Oxford American Handbook of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and Supportive Care*” has been thoroughly revised with additions of evidence based advancements supplemented with algorithms and tables. Certain contents have been thoroughly updated as per new evidence and national project guidelines. The book comprehensively summarizes various aspects of Hospice and Palliative Care in a very lucid and easy to understand manner.

Palliative care includes management of not only physical symptoms but also other domains including social, spiritual and psychological aspects. The book includes all domains of health care in relation to supportive and palliative care. The ethical issues and dilemmas during provision of advanced disease remain a major concern. The book provides very lucid information in relation to ethical aspects and would help the reader to take appropriate ethical decisions in the interest of patients and humanity. The editor and authors have added a special section entitled of “clinical pearls”. This very concisely summarizes the most important themes of a chapter with clinical tips. The editors have included all groups of patients *i.e.* children, adults and geriatrics in the context of palliative and supportive care. Information related to all specialty of cardiovascular, central nervous system, hepatic, renal, respiratory system and oncology has been included. Major terminal illnesses such as advanced cancers, advanced heart ailments, advanced respiratory diseases have been discussed in detail as these affect major groups of patients requiring supportive care. Also, the major symptoms occurring in many disease processes like pain, cachexia, bowel dysfunction *etc* have been discussed lucidly and this will be of great help to all physicians, and especially those practicing palliative care. Some contents are presented in the form of flow charts, tables and algorithms which are comprehensive and easy to grasp. Definite evidence in palliative care in many aspects is still to be achieved. The chapter on research in palliative care provides insights to the readers about this research which will lead to the provision of more research evidence in the near future. Working in the medical profession at times may lead to fatigue and exhaustion, better termed as 'burn out'. The book includes a chapter to cover this aspect in order to help medicos to continue to provide the best care for their patients.

This hand book would be of utmost usefulness not only for palliative care physicians but also for nurse practitioners and paramedics associated with palliative care. It is also a handy book for trainees for their clinical practice and examination preparation. This book provides up-to-date information with practical tips to health care professionals. It also provides rapid access for daily reference for bedside clinical and administrative management. The book would be more user friendly if the various concepts may be elaborated with examples. Also the addition of cases and case discussions would further improve the book.

* Address correspondence to this author at the Dr BRAIRCH, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi-110029, India; Tel: +91-9810394950, +919868398335, 011-29575107; E-mail: drrgarg@hotmail.com

Overall, the book is well written and provides a very lucid, comprehensive and evidence based exposition of hospice and palliative care management. This book will be important academic armamentarium for physicians, nurses and paramedics involved in hospice and palliative care.

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