

BOOK REVIEW

Essentials of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Musculoskeletal Disorders, Pain and Rehabilitation, Second Edition, Walter R. T. Frontera, Julie K. Silver, Thomas D. Rizzo Jr, pp. 954, 2008. Price: EUR 95.99. ISBN-10: 1 4160 4007 2; ISBN-13: 978 1 4160 4007 1. Saunders Elsevier, Philadelphia, USA.

This is a very comprehensive volume on physical medicine and rehabilitation, which covers most of the relevant disorders. The editors' stated aim is to present conditions that the average internist, family practitioner, physiatrist (rehabilitation physician), orthopaedist, rheumatologist and neurologist meets in their practice. Thus, the book is intended to reach beyond the speciality of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine, or Rehabilitation Medicine, as it is called in some countries in northern Europe. It also seems to be directed specifically towards physicians, whereas the contributions of other rehabilitation professionals and the management within a rehabilitation team are mentioned fairly marginally. This may have its explanation in the stated concept of the book, and that it focuses on rehabilitation in ambulatory settings, where a rehabilitation team may be absent or less well defined.

The book is divided into 3 sections: specific musculoskeletal diagnoses; management of various pain conditions; and rehabilitation, in which different chronic conditions that may benefit from rehabilitation interventions are presented. All of the chapters are structured similarly, making a valuable contribution to the book's readability. They contain synonyms, ICD-9 codes (why not ICD-10?), definition, physical examination, functional limitations, diagnostic studies, differential diagnosis, treatment, potential disease complications, and references.

As can be seen from the contents list, the volume has a predominance of musculoskeletal conditions, including pain

problems, and only 21 of the 153 chapters deal with neurological conditions. Spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury (including mild traumatic brain injury) are well covered, whereas the 2 chapters on stroke are rather short, considering the large group of patients in ambulatory settings who have sustained a stroke. Furthermore, the activities of different allied health professions are not covered in any detail, which is a limitation; better knowledge of their activities is very valuable for the physician in the rehabilitation management. Vocational rehabilitation is mentioned briefly, but here there may be various management structures within a country and still more between countries, and this topic therefore has to be dealt with in other ways. It is also a pity that the editors did not try to relate to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) in some way.

The positive aspects of this volume are its comprehensive coverage of the field and the support it provides for physicians in different specialities, both in management from a physical medicine point of view and in aspects of rehabilitation. This book can be recommended in particular for physicians in general/family practice and physical and rehabilitation medicine, but also for physicians in different specialities, as an overview of physical medicine and rehabilitation. It includes contributions from a very large group of authors, mainly from the USA. The editors are to be congratulated for a very extensive piece of work.

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