

# Reviews

## BOOK REVIEW

### DEVELOPING THE WISE DOCTOR: A RESOURCE FOR TRAINERS AND TRAINEES IN MMC

By Della Fish and Linda de Cossart

The Royal Society of Medicine Press Ltd

Reviewed by Dr Rachel Hooke, Medical Management  
Consultant

This is a refreshing and potentially controversial critique of the foundation programme. It says that the new system is managerially – rather than educationally led, and brings clinical learning and assessment down to a simple level. Doctors are reduced to mere technicians who strive to achieve individual competencies rather than an overall competence. The authors propose new, broad-ranging competencies that cannot easily be assessed using evidence. They advocate the use of

reflection, narrative and context. There is a strong theme running through against using protocol-based medicine for unique individual patients, as there is more to it than that.

The book argues that in a modern world that is obsessed with measuring everything, some results are intangible. Teaching and learning methods are explored, including the apparently paradoxical use of listening by the teacher. “Writing for learning” is an interesting concept, and I

know from experience that you can clarify and consolidate your own understanding by doing this.

The book is mostly accurate with its grammar and punctuation, which makes a pleasant change from many books I review. The word “disinterested” is used correctly. Stresses on words can change the whole meaning, and the book uses an interesting example of “one-armed bandit” as opposed to “one armed bandit”.

Foundation curriculum cynics will be reassured to find that this supports their views. Proponents should take careful note. These cannot be dismissed as just unsubstantiated fringe views from an unconventional minority.

## BOOK REVIEW

### PRIMARY CARE ENGLISH

By R Ribes, I Garcia-Gimeno, R Jones

Springer-Verlag Berlin

Reviewed by Dr Myriam Farah  
Klinikowski

A sound knowledge of English is vital for any doctor. The idea to write *Primary Care*

*English* came from foreign doctors, who currently work or have worked in the UK. The venture was supported by one of the most renowned British doctors in primary care, Professor Roger Jones. The authors have experienced the language addressed in the book. This is what makes the book so interesting.

It teaches English in a practical context, providing knowledge about essential grammar for every day clinical use, as well as information about the principles, concepts and organisational matters related to primary care. It teaches the foreign doctor how to become acquainted with the daily practice routine. Each clinical area is covered in individual chapters. Having all these features in one concise volume saves time and expenses.

As a foreigner doctor who studied and graduated in the UK, I wish this book had been available when I started my career. It would have speeded up my learning process. I recommend the book to any medical professional whose first language is not English, and who in any way, wishes to expand their professional horizons.

[www.spandoc.com](http://www.spandoc.com)

## BOOK REVIEW

### IN STITCHES. THE HIGHS AND LOWS AS AN A&E DOCTOR

By Dr Nick Edwards

Friday Books

Reviewed by Dr Monica Lalanda,  
Emergency Medicine doctor

This book should be a compulsory read for every politician and every potential A&E user. In a very entertaining way, it

reflects the current poor state of modern NHS. The author is an emergency medicine trainee but he has written this story under a pen name and has based it on his blog

diary. It almost feels like a whistle-blowing exercise on the national situation of emergency medicine.

You can sense the humanity of the author throughout the book but above all you can feel his frustration. Nick Edwards loves his job but he is not allowed to care for his patients as well as he would like. The politically driven four-hour target is distorting the priorities in emergency departments and destroying the morale of the staff. He is fed up with increased managers' presence and accountancy rules prevailing over clinical care.

Most doctors working in

emergency departments will recognise this experience; from the heartbreak of failed paediatric resuscitation and the treatment of regulars and heart-sink patients, to the fear of aggressive punters and the confrontation with the effects of alcohol and system abuse.

But the joys of the specialty are well reflected too: the strong feeling of team work, the excitement of not knowing what comes next, the need for a large variety of skills and the joy of making a difference to a patient's life. If you hate the word “breaches”, you will love this book. 98% of the stories were written in under four hours.