

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **Clinician's Guide to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease**

Edited by T. Howes and D. Bellamy

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Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) has always been an important issue for specialist clinicians and patients with the disease. More recently, it has become of increased interest to nonspecialist clinicians, as well as the research community, pharmaceutical industry and health managers. Therefore, there is a need for a short textbook devoted to this topic that provides an overview for both the nonspecialist and other groups involved in the care of patients with COPD. This book provides such an overview, but with a few reservations.

The book consists of nine chapters, which cover all the relevant topics including: definition and pathophysiology; epidemiology; clinical diagnosis; disease prevention; medical management; exacerbations; and outcome measures. The final chapter includes several case studies. All chapters are written by a hospital-based physician, with the exception of a contribution by a general practitioner on primary secondary interface.

So, what are my reservations? Some sections of the text are not very reader-friendly. This is due to long paragraphs and, in some

sections, writing that is rather wordy. I also think the figure used to explain spirometry could be clearer. The measurement and interpretation of spirometry is often one of the areas that nonspecialists find the hardest to understand. I would also have welcomed the inclusion of a few more case studies in the last chapter. Finally, the references and further reading list in some of the chapters are rather out of date.

Although there are several areas in which this book could be improved, perhaps in the next edition, I would be happy to recommend the present version to nonspecialists wishing to know more about COPD.

**N.C. Thomson**

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