

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Community Rehabilitation in Neurology*, edited by M. Barnes & H. Radermacher, pp. 256, 2003. Price £55.00 (hardback). ISBN: 0 52180 874 X. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

This book focuses on the long-term rehabilitation and integration into the community of persons with neurological disabilities. It takes the perspective of the patient and tries to answer the question: What can be done to help a disabled person reach a high degree of participation in the community? Thus, the authors deal less with early, predominantly medical, aspects and more with late, mainly psychosocial, aspects of rehabilitation. The importance of early medical rehabilitation is not forgotten, although the focus is on alternative models rather than on hospital-based processes. An important but also often difficult task for rehabilitation professionals, namely to meet and to support the long-lasting coping process both for the individuals and for the relatives, is discussed. There is a broad survey of up to date research in the field of community rehabilitation, but the great difficulties and need to find scientific evidence for the methods used in the area are also stressed.

The title of the book may suggest that it deals with neurological diseases in general. However, focus is on acquired brain injuries and multiple sclerosis, which are two of the main causes of disability in the Western world. In one chapter, various evaluated models for rehabilitation of persons with brain injury are discussed. Individual rehabilitation problems and situations are illustrated well by interesting case presentations.

Most aspects of community rehabilitation, from models of disability and concepts of community to the views of disabled people, are covered in a comprehensive way. The main part of the book concerns the situation in the developed world but there is also a chapter entitled "Lessons from the South", covering rehabilitation in less developed parts of the world where community-based rehabilitation has been used for a long time, often as the only option.

Last but not least, there is a conclusive chapter, "The Way Forward", which aims to inspire to future development and research. One suggestion, which is also discussed, is to support a new profession: the generic therapist with a broad professional role.

In conclusion, I find that this book deals with an important area of rehabilitation. It can be recommended to rehabilitation professionals and researchers from the medical as well as from the social sphere.

*Björn Johansson*  
Specialist in Rehabilitation Medicine  
University Hospital  
Uppsala, Sweden

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*Postpolio syndrome*, edited by Julie K. Silver & Anne C. Gawne, pp. 323, 2004. Price £21.99. ISBN: 1-56053-606-3. Hanley & Belfus, Philadelphia, USA.

This book comprehensively updates previously published monographs on postpolio syndrome, and brings up new research mixed with current clinical practice. There are a large number of references, which are very valuable and bring the literature in this field up to date. However, different systems for arranging the reference list have unfortunately been used in different chapters.

The editors are well-known researchers and clinicians in the postpolio management field. The chapters are written by well-chosen experts, which are with one exception all from North America, however, the literature from European researchers is very well-referenced. For the more practical aspects of postpolio management, experience from other continents could have been of value.

The book is dedicated to Anne C. Gawne, one of the editors, who sadly passed away before the book was published. Her large contribution to research and clinical practice in postpolio management will be apparent from this book.

Lauro S. Halstead, a leading expert of postpolio research and clinical practice, has written the first chapter. The author gives a very valuable background to the concept of postpolio syndrome and how it has developed successively. Also included are current revised criteria, not only including gradual or abrupt onset of progressive muscle weakness, but also the recommendation that postpolio syndrome should be confirmed by re-evaluation at least 3 to 6 months after the original diagnosis. Thus, new weakness is emphasized as an obligatory criterion for postpolio syndrome. Halstead and other authors in the book also stress that persons with late effects of polio who do not fulfil the criteria for postpolio syndrome can still have similar other problems. The title, while increasing the interest for the book, may therefore be somewhat misleading.

There are valuable and comprehensive chapters by experts such as Anne Gawne and Daria Trojan as well as Neil Cashman, Fredrick Maynard and John Bach, on assessment, treatment, pain problems and pulmonary dysfunction. Kristian Borg, the only non-North American author of a chapter, discusses postpolio fatigue, which is still a poorly-understood problem. James Agre writes a long, informative review on pros and cons of physical exercise and training. There are chapters on physical therapy, aquatic therapy, gait problems and orthoses, occupational therapy, energy conservation, aging and well-being. Coping behaviour and the adaptive process are discussed in a constructive way. Naturally, with so many authors there will be a number of overlaps and repetition of information; on the other hand, this may be necessary for the sake of readability of the different chapters.

This book will be very valuable for those already active in postpolio research and management, as well as for those starting a postpolio clinic, or who come into contact with this large group of patients; polio being the second leading cause of paralysis in western countries.

*Gunnar Grimby*  
Editor-in-Chief

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