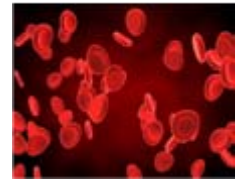


The GP Update Handbook



Spring 2010

www.gp-update.co.uk

Abbreviations used in the GP Update Handbook

We try to avoid using abbreviations except where they are universally recognised (MI, COPD). The only exceptions to this are the abbreviations of some of the journals we use:

Ann Int Med	Annals of Internal Medicine
Arch Int Med	Archives of Internal Medicine
BJGP	British Journal of General Practice
BMJ	British Medical Journal
DTB	Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin
MeReC	National Prescribing Centre Bulletins (<i>not exactly an abbreviation!</i>)
NEJM	New England Journal of Medicine
NICE	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
SIGN	Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network

Statistical abbreviations are listed in the statistics chapter.

A note on Cochrane references

Cochrane reviews are referenced as: Cochrane 2005;CD002946. Go to the Cochrane website (www.cochrane.org) and type the 'article number' without the date (eg. CD002946) into the search engine and it will find the correct article for you. *NB if you go to www.cochrane.co.uk you must specify that you want to search Cochrane.org or you will generate no search results. It's obvious how to do this when you get there.*

We make every effort to ensure the information in these pages is accurate and correct at the date of publication, but it is of necessity of a brief and general nature, and this should not replace your own good clinical judgement, or be regarded as a substitute for taking professional advice in appropriate circumstances. In particular check drug doses, side effects and interactions with the British National Formulary. Save insofar as any such liability cannot be excluded at law, we do not accept any liability for loss of any type caused by reliance on the information in these pages.

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You can contact us at: GP Update, Mill Stream Surgery, Benson, Oxfordshire OX10 6RL.

Welcome to the GP Update Handbook!

Keeping up to date as a GP or practice nurse isn't easy. Every week another few journals land on our doormat. And despite our best intentions, they often end up joining the ever increasing pile of unread paperwork in the corner of our study or consulting room.

We, like you, are just ordinary GPs, but we have dedicated time to read the journals. We draw together all the latest evidence and guidelines. We focus on what is relevant to us in the consulting room; what GPs and practice nurses need to know, how we can incorporate the new evidence into our practice, and answering the questions our patients may ask us.

So where do we get our information from? We read all the main journals (the BMJ, BJGP, Lancet, NEJM, Family Practice etc.) as well as material from bodies such as the Drug & Therapeutics Bulletin and the National Prescribing Centre. We also read any relevant guidelines, including from NICE and SIGN. All the time we focus on material that is relevant to primary care, asking the important question 'So what does all this mean in practice?'

Revalidation is looming on the horizon. Because many GPs are uncertain exactly what revalidation will involve, we have summarised the latest from the RCGP on page 6. Part of this involves earning CPD credits to show evidence of ongoing learning. So we've developed the **Revalidation Action Pack** to help you earn your credits. By picking a few of the activities in the Revalidation Action Pack over the next year you can start to earn CPD credits whilst, at the same time, ensuring that the new evidence in the Handbook gets embedded into your practice.

We have no involvement whatsoever with the pharmaceutical industry, because we think it would be unethical to do so, and we feel very uncomfortable that so much GP and practice nurse education is sponsored by the pharmaceutical industry. We want to be able to tell you the facts as they are, not as Big Pharma might like you to hear them!

Who are the GP Update Team?

Lucy Jenkins is a partner and trainer at Mill Stream Surgery in Benson, Oxfordshire. In the past she worked as a GPSI in public health and she also has experience working overseas, most recently spending her 6 month sabbatical in a mission hospital in Egypt. Lucy works 3 days a week at the surgery and 2 days a week teaching and writing for this Handbook.

Peter Rose has been a partner at Mill Stream Surgery for 25 years. He also works half time as a senior lecturer at Oxford University Department of Primary Health Care, with research interests in genetics, cancer and infections. Peter contributes to this Handbook in areas where he has particular expertise.

Caroline Scott is a full time partner at Windrush Health Centre in Oxfordshire. Caroline did extended academic training with a special interest in medical education, and as part of this, was a programme director on the Reading VTS. Caroline writes some of the material for the Handbook as well as teaching on some of our courses.

James Cave has been a partner at the Downland Practice in Berkshire for 20 years. Outside the practice he writes for the local paper, has been involved in the development of PCGs/Ts, Lord Darzi's Next Stage review and the charity CRUSE. He still belongs to a young principal group – now in its 20th year. In 2009 James was awarded an OBE for services to medicine.

We believe general practice is a great job! We hope GP Update will give you a new enthusiasm for the work you do, greater confidence in your knowledge base and the inspiration and practical support to make changes to your practice.

We welcome your feedback; do email us at: feedback@gp-update.co.uk

Lucy, Peter, Caroline and James.

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