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Kidney Disease Management: a practical approach for the non-specialist healthcare practitioner, First edition

Edited by Rachel Lewis and Helen Noble

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From the outset I found this newly released text visually appealing and comprehensive in its breadth of subjects covered and highly relevant to all nephrology nurses and health professionals. The soft-covered A4-size ensures it is compact and easy to use, with the 10 chapters averaging 20 pages each, providing a depth of information that is surprising considering the size of the text. The layout of each chapter with headings and subheadings makes it easy for the reader to quickly locate the desired information as well and flipping through the text to discover more.

The introduction nicely describes the purpose of the book "to optimise the management of patients with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)", acknowledging the resource constraints modern health care works within. Based on the British health care system, the text alludes to changes in practice and the focus on primary management with appropriate brevity, focusing on patient care and clinical context is maintained through the text. The book unashamedly promotes itself as a practical approach for the non-specialist health care practitioner, but with its broad coverage of all aspects of care in relation to CKD management including treatment options, psychological aspects, acute kidney injury (AKI), hospital care on the surgical ward, medication management, nutrition and supportive care, I found this text essential for any nurses wishing to keep up to date with current care strategies across the breadth of the renal service.

The introduction gave a comprehensive review of each of the chapters which I found invaluable to quickly navigate and investigate the extent of information covered. Edited by Rachel Lewis and Helen Noble, Nurse Practitioner UK and Nursing Lecturer Northern Ireland, respectively, this compiled book brings together the collective knowledge and experience of 23 nursing, medical, allied health and patient advocacy renal experts primarily from Britain but also Australia, with dietetic input from Sally Noble.

The use of diagrams, photos and tables as well as highlighted text and brief paragraphs makes this book an exciting and enjoyable read as complete chapters or in small sections. I particularly enjoyed the sensible and simple manner in which concepts were portrayed which makes this resource highly applicable to novice and experienced nurses. With a lack of current nursing-based texts specifically focused on renal health care and relevant to the Australian nurse, I am delighted that this

inexpensive text is available as a general resource and for those wishing to update their knowledge or undertake further study.

It is also refreshing to note the strong emphasis on patient involvement and collaborative care with many of the authors touching on previously taboo subjects such as inequity in use of renal replacement therapies, communication and discussion with patients, shared decision making, and concerns regarding care of those with cognitive impairment.

A comprehensive explanation of the benefits and complications of each treatment choice was discussed including a well thought out comparison of survival on therapies such as transplant versus dialysis, continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (PD) versus automated PD, home versus centre-based haemodialysis (HD) (Geeson, Tomson & Lappim, Chapter 4, General considerations to treatment modalities). The AKI chapter covered the expected components including causes, investigation, phases and symptoms, but surprisingly and yet vital, an extensive section on communication with patients regarding the risks and possibilities of poor prognosis. This included a 10-point discussion explaining important elements such as being honest, discussions with loved ones, care of the confused, resuscitation orders, leading onto an overview of advanced care plans and power of attorney (Harkins, Lewis & Hilton, Chapter 6, AKI in the hospitalised patient).

Understandably, the key concerns regarding patient care in a non-renal ward were discussed by Jones and Higginbottom (Chapter 7), with clearly described sections on hyperkalaemia, potassium rebound, preservation of renal vessels, PD and HD access and information on blood transfusions. Care of renal transplant patients was also reiterated throughout the book including the use of several renal-based case studies commonly seen including gout, colonoscopy and contrast studies, which served to reinforce key points. Medication management (Dunleavy, Chapter 8) commenced with an overview of bioavailability, distribution, metabolism and elimination, which was written in an easy to understand manner, that progressed onto to a systems-based approach to medications which increased readability and relevance to the renal nurse.

Overall, I found this new text refreshing, insightful and, above all, with a patient focus at the centre. It is an invaluable text for any nurses commencing or continuing in the renal field. It's a credit to all authors involved.