



Book review

Working knowledge of diabetes

Fast facts: diabetes mellitus, 5th ed. Ian N Scobie, Katharine Samaras. Abingdon, UK: Health Press Limited, 2014 (136 pp, \$22.42). ISBN 9781908541550.

THIS PUBLICATION is now in its fifth edition. It was first published in 1996, with the next two editions being published over the next 13 years, but the last three editions have been published since 2009, presumably reflecting the dynamic changes in diabetes recently.

As its title suggests, the book sets out to succinctly provide facts about diabetes. In this regard it is very successful. The authors do not provide detailed and in-depth reviews of diabetes, its complications and its management recommendations, which would clearly be inappropriate for this type of book. It is designed instead to educate readers who have a low level of knowledge of diabetes. The book gives the reader a good basic understanding about all aspects of diabetes and its management. It is written in a very easy style which is a pleasure to read and is appropriate for its target audience.

The book is well presented with 12 chapters covering all aspects of diabetes from epidemiology to complications and management. Each chapter has useful summary tables and key references, and excellent illustrations,

figures and pictures. The section on retinopathy stands out in this regard. The chapters cover each topic adequately, providing succinct summaries of issues rather than heavy, complex, extensively referenced discussions.

The book would be ideal for general practitioners, medical students, allied health professionals and nursing staff who are commencing work in diabetes and are keen to acquire a sound level of knowledge. A health professional who has been working in diabetes for several years would find the book a little superficial, but it would potentially be ideal for some patients and their relatives to understand diabetes and its management. Indeed, there could be a major role for this book in patient education, although the language used is probably more suitable for persons with a basic medical knowledge. All in all, this is a very useful book on diabetes for all health professionals involved in the management of persons with diabetes.

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