

BOOK REVIEW**ACUTE GENERAL MEDICINE: BRIEF LEARNING MATERIALS**

Editors: Kumar and Clark. Reed Healthcare Publishing

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ACUTE GENERAL MEDICINE: SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKBOOK

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Kumar and Clark have produced these 2 new books entitled Acute General Medicine, Brief Learning Materials (BLM) and the companion, Self Assessment Workbook (SAW). Both of these are meant to be used together with their textbook, Clinical Medicine and numerous references are made to it.

The concept employed in these 2 books is "service-based learning" which is based on the Royal College of Physicians' Core Curriculum for Senior House Officers in General Medicine. It is targeted at the junior doctor in medical postings (house officer and medical officer in our local situation). Service-based learning occurs at four levels; learning from practice, using BLM, using SAW and other learning which is explained in the prefaces of both books.

Both books are grouped into 17 sections covering all of Internal Medicine. This handbook format is easy on the reader and allows you to cover all of Internal Medicine while identifying your strong and weak topics.

BLM is well presented with brief case history followed by a common sense approach to the management. What I like is the summary tables of important tips, information and investigations. However, the reader is often referred to the appropriate section in the textbook Clinical Medicine for additional reading as the coverage in BLM is a little superficial. SAW builds on the reader's understanding by its assessment which is generally fair, combining both memory and application type questions. The plus point for the SAW is its record pages which allows the reader to chart and plan his study progress.

Overall, these books give a structured approach to junior doctors in medical postings and offer a scaffold for them to build upon. However, they are not self-sufficient and a standard medical text is still necessary. For MRCP candidates, these books may be a foundation to build on but will need to be supplemented heavily with additional reading.

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