



Essentials of Pediatrics: Padmasani Venkat Ramanan and Ramachandran P (eds)

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Prescription of the new competency based under-graduate medical curriculum by the National Medical Council (NMC) has brought forward the need for modification in medical teaching and evaluation strategies. Successful implementation of this curriculum requires alterations in medical textbooks as well, the contents of which should now be aligned to the subject-wise competencies defined in the curriculum. In this context, this new textbook is an apt resource for teaching pediatrics to undergraduate (UG) medical students in India. It is a compendium of information on “what a medical graduate should know”, for providing community level preventive and promotive health care services to children, and for managing common childhood disorders.

The book endeavours to cover all the topics included in the new UG curriculum, and each chapter begins by stating the relevant competencies covered in that chapter. The learning objectives are outlined in the beginning of each chapter and key points are summarised in the end. Each chapter also has a section on self-evaluation that helps reinforce key principles presented in the chapter. Case scenarios are included where appropriate; helping the student apply these principles in clinical practice. Some of the scenarios/questions provide opportunities for developing communication skills of the student as well. A list of suggested readings for each topic is included in the annexure.

Aligning the contents to the competencies defined in the new curriculum has helped ensure that all “must know” areas get adequate coverage, while over-burdening the

under-graduate student with more information than required at their level is minimised. There is adequate coverage of community pediatrics and national programs related to child health. In all relevant chapters, a section on history taking and examination is included to help develop these clinical skills. The book includes access to online additional resources including MCQs, clinical cases and power point presentations related to the topics covered.

The contents are well organised and presentation style is reader friendly with use of multi-color format, an “easy on the eye” font size, tables, flow charts and illustrative cartoons/photographs. The size of the book has been carefully limited to 724 pages, with extra resources available as online material.

Desirable additions presently not included in the book are sections providing information on commonly used drugs, pediatric procedures, and growth reference tables. There is also scope for improvement in quality of photographs.

Overall, the book is an appropriate, updated learning resource well aligned to the NMC recommended UG curriculum, and is thus recommended as a core textbook for use of undergraduate medical students. It would also be a good reference for medical officers, residents in pediatrics, and practicing general physicians and pediatricians.

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