

The Tool Kit for Dental Risk Management

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This book is designed to provide the busy dentist with a reference to risk management in dental practice and refers to associated risks to patients, staff, and premises as well as the dentist and his/her reputation. The preface puts this in context with an optimistic commentary about the present government's commitment to the availability to all of high quality National Health Service dentistry.

The authors are well qualified to provide authoritative advice on risk management, and they impart this in a refreshingly informal and readable (even entertaining) style in subsequent sections. The best way to provide a feel for the content of this book is to provide the section headings, which are: (1) What is risk management? (2) Clinical practice management; (3) Dental treatment; (4) Dental laboratories; (5) Clinical treatment; (6) Health and safety; (7) Finance management; and (8) Development plans.

The section on dental treatment deals with generic issues such as infection control, examination and diagnosis, special investigations such as radiology, treatment planning, cosmetic dentistry and patient privacy, whereas that on clinical treatment deals with health and safety related to amalgam restorations, periodontal disease, endodontics, crown and bridge work, oral surgery procedures, prosthetics and orthodontics/paedodontics (yes, under one heading!), implants,

and two headings that may well have fitted better under dental treatment: 'Managing the dentist-patient relationship' and 'Medication/prescriptions'.

I must admit to having been extremely impressed with the common sense advice provided in all aspects of clinical dental practice, the hazard warnings and *aides-mémoires* provided throughout, and the blend of authoritative information, yet entertaining style. A few things that I found particularly valuable were the cut out check list for an emergency kit in the dental surgery, advice on tricky issues such as removal of amalgams where there is no apparent clinical reason for replacement, broken instruments, cross infection precautions, including recommendations appropriate for Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease (CJD) (and who the 'at risk' groups of CJD patients are).

In summary, I feel that in the light of an increasingly litigation-conscious public this would be an extremely valuable reference book to have access to in dental practice, and while it would be possible to access the same information in more comprehensive, dedicated texts, this would be as wise a way to spend £30 as any other in contemporary dental practice, so as regards an investment, there would be little risk attached!

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