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Reichman and Hershfield's tuberculosis: a comprehensive, international approach, third edition, parts A and B

Editor: Mario C Raviglione

Publisher: Informa Healthcare USA, New York, 2006

ISBN: 0-8493-9271-3; hardback, 1400 pages; price £ 170

From the publication of its first edition in 1993, *Reichman and Hershfield's tuberculosis: a comprehensive, international approach* was an unusual textbook. The first edition was not merely a state-of-the-art representation of research and science: it almost presaged, by its unusually comprehensive and international perspective, the upsurge in attention tuberculosis (TB) would receive from the early 1990s onwards.

In its own way, the book was part of that upsurge in attention. One of its original editors, Lee Reichman, coined the phrase "*the U-shaped curve of concern*" for TB. He meant that political will and funding may bring down the disease, but that resurgence will occur if political will and funding are withdrawn prematurely, emphasizing the long-term nature of the fight.

Right from the first edition, the book hasn't restricted itself to science and research, but has provided important information on TB diagnosis and treatment, described the breadth and complexity of the challenges that it presents to public health and captured the disease's global manifestations.

Under its new editor, Mario Raviglione, director of WHO's Stop TB Department (with Reichman and Hershfield's names incorporated into the title), the book has become even more comprehensive. No other books on tuberculosis offer the reader a chapter on the genomics of the tubercle bacillus almost next to one on the complexities of the control of the disease in prisons.

Similarly, a chapter on the elimination of the disease in the industrialized world is next to one on the challenges of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in eastern Europe and TB-HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. Such diverse subjects as the economic and financial aspects of global TB control and surgical treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis also are discussed.

Raviglione prefaces the book by stating his intention to cover "what needs to be integrated in practice through effective collaboration between research scientists, physicians, public-health officials, epidemiologists, and policy-makers". Executive editor Claude Lenfant introduces the book as a veritable "road map" for the implementation of the Global Plan to Stop TB, 2006–2015. I concur with these statements and hope that those who read the book will agree that it more than succeeds in these endeavours.

The third edition is an impressive multi-authored, peer-reviewed treatise published in two parts, consisting of 50 chapters loosely divided into six sections. For a multi-authored book its contents are surprisingly coherent, and in no way monotonous or repetitive. An additional strength is that it stimulates the reader to look beyond usual approaches for fresh insights and experiences in other chapters.

These features make the book a must-have for those working in tuberculosis control, be it in the industrialized world or in national programmes in Asia, Africa or Latin America. The breadth of its presentation, also make it a valuable resource for health officials who want current information on public health practice. But all readers interested in tuberculosis will be pleasantly surprised and informed by the insights and experiences presented. Raviglione is to be congratulated on this achievement. ■

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