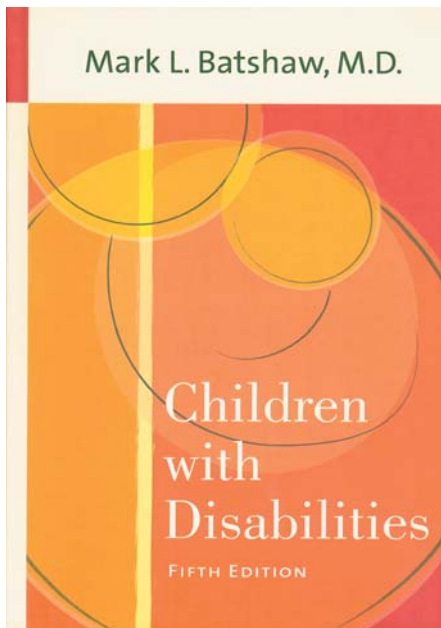


# Book reviews



## Children with Disabilities (5th edn)

Mark L Batshaw, editor  
Paul H Brookes Publishing Co, 2002  
Hard cover, 870 pages, \$107.80

Estimates of children who have developmental disorders serious enough to interfere with their lives and compromise their ultimate outcomes vary, but have been estimated to be as high as 15% if language, behavioural and learning problems are included. Not only do these children represent a great deal of frustration and anguish for themselves, families and teachers, but often their developmental trajectory and ultimate life course is significantly compromised by their difficulties. They constitute a significant burden on the community in terms of their increased need for specialist and additional services.

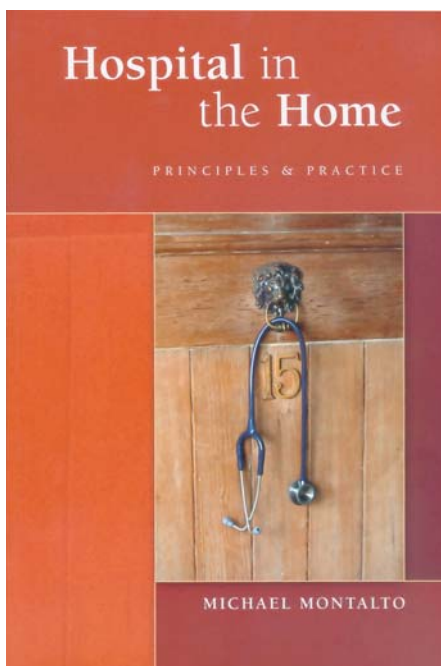
While it is unrealistic to expect general practitioners to become involved in the finer points of assessment and management of many of these children, in many cases the problem will first be suspected or detected by the GP. In addition, children with developmental disorders have the usual illnesses that can be expected of all children, so GPs will become involved in

aspects of their management irrespective.

'Children with Disabilities' is a comprehensive book of all aspects of disabilities in children. Its chapter topics range from chromosomes and hereditary and birth defects, through to health care delivery systems and financial issues. Each chapter includes teaching goals at the beginning, one or more case studies, and a summary of the content of the chapter at the end. It is very accessible to the reader, clearly written despite having multiple authors, and is the type of book that one can dip into to read about early intervention, rehabilitation, cerebral palsy, pervasive developmental disorders, or a whole range of issues.

Now in its fifth edition, 'Children with Disabilities' has been used by students from a range of disciplines (including medicine) as well as a resource book for the range of professional groups involved with children with disabilities. Although it is more a book for institution libraries than for the individual GP, it would be a valuable resource group for GPs dealing with children with disabilities and their families.

*Frank Oberklaid  
Royal Children's Hospital  
Parkville, Vic*



## Hospital in the Home Principles and practice

Michael Montalto  
Mercury Medical, 2002  
Soft cover, 164 pages, \$66.00  
[www.homehospital.com.au](http://www.homehospital.com.au)

Hospital in the home (HIH) care sits at the boundaries of clinical care between the hospital and the community, enabling patients who would otherwise be cared for in a hospital setting to receive acute care in a variety of community based settings including their own

home. The definition and structure of initiatives labelled as 'HIH' vary widely, perhaps because many such initiatives have emerged from the efforts of committed individuals in diverse contexts. In the introduction of 'Hospital in the Home', the author puts forward the challenge thus: has HIH emerged as a 'chaotic attempt to scrape together local resources in response to local incentives' or is there a 'rich tapestry of varied models and methods'?

Dr Michael Montalto is well placed to answer this challenge and integrate current thinking and practice in HIH care as he has managed over 3000 patients in acute HIH

care over the past eight years and is currently the director of a HIH program in Victoria.

In doing so, he addresses two very different aims. The first aim explores both the theoretical and academic thinking concerning HIH services whereas the second aims to share his practical clinical experience.

'Hospital in the Home' is divided into five main chapters that discuss various aspects ranging from organisational models of HIH care to measuring quality, costs and ethics of HIH care. Three other chapters address clinical

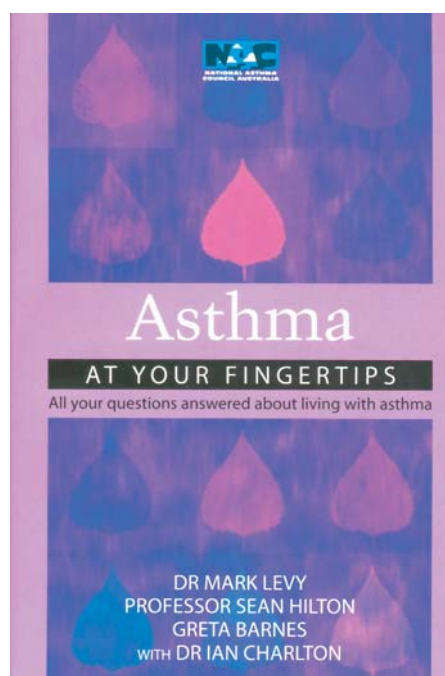
issues such as principles of patient selection and various technical and therapeutic tools. The academic and theoretical aspects of the book are the most convincing, whereas the clinical sections vary from general principles to briefer 'notes' on various therapies and conditions. All chapters have references for further reading, which are generally more extensive in the theoretical and academic sections.

Readability is reduced by the poor layout design, however, future editions could benefit

from tighter editing and improved layout.

In its entirety, this interesting book is likely to be valuable to those actively engaged in or contemplating setting up HIH services, especially the academic and theoretical sections. The practical clinical sections may be better suited to a separate small handbook focussing on helping health professionals engaged in the actual delivery of care in this important arena.

*Elizabeth Farmer  
Bedford Park, SA*



## **Asthma At Your Fingertips**

### **All your questions answered about living with asthma**

Mark Levy, Sean Hilton, Greta Barnes, Ian Charlton

McGraw Hill, 2002

Soft cover, 242 pages, \$29.95

About 40% of Australians will have respiratory symptoms consistent with asthma at some time in their lives', and as asthma is a chronic condition most general practitioners will spend a significant amount of time managing asthma. It is always useful to have practical patient orientated resources to supplement time spent in the consulting room.

'Asthma At Your Fingertips' is a UK publication, which has been 'Australianised' by Dr Ian Charlton a New South Wales GP with a special interest in asthma management. The National Asthma Council of Australia has endorsed the book.

This book is a reference book for asthma sufferers and their families which provides clear, accurate and up to date information in a question and answer format, covering the most common issues encountered by the authors in their care of asthma sufferers –

from emergency management to the role of complementary medicines.

'Asthma At Your Fingertips' does not claim to be a medical textbook and would not provide a lot of new medical information for the average GP, however, it does reinforce pre-existing knowledge as well as providing occasional titbits of general information relating to asthma such as how to eradicate house dust mite from soft toys by putting them in the freezer!

The four appendices containing useful information such as contact details of regional asthma foundations, and the names and illustrations of all available asthma medications, provide a handy reference for GPs. The text also contains practical information about which spacer device can be used with each inhaler and a clear, step-by-step guide to using each asthma device, which will aid patient education.

'Asthma at Your Fingertips' strongly promotes self care and self management of asthma, in conjunction with medical and allied health professionals to achieve optimum symptom control and a normal, active lifestyle for people with asthma.

*Jane Doyle  
Clifton Hill, Vic*

AFP