Real-life critical care medicine


The practice of intensive care medicine is forever evolving to meet the demands of critically ill patients. Of particular importance has been the recent increasing advocacy for critical care outreach through improved surveillance outside intensive care units, and the provision of medical emergency teams.

The authors of this book have been pioneers in this evolutionary process, and in this second edition the reader is presented with a very practical, commonsense approach to the care of the acutely unwell patient.

The format is very easy to follow, and information about both generic and specific aspects of critical care medicine is easily accessed. The major emphasis of the book, however, is on general, practical topics rather than comprehensive reviews of diseases or specific organ failures (although these are very adequately covered). A junior hospital doctor wanting to refresh his or her knowledge of fluid and electrolyte therapy is as well served as a consultant in a peripheral centre who needs to urgently review planning priorities before transporting a sick patient.

The text is concise and contains the right balance between practical and theoretical issues. There are troubleshooting sections at the end of selected chapters, and there is a further reading section at the end of every chapter.

Clinical intensive care and acute medicine will be used widely by postgraduate medical trainees rotating through intensive care but will also be a very welcome companion for critical care vocational trainees and consultant intensive care physicians.

Although there is a chapter on quality assurance and clinical audit, there is relatively little information about complications. This is partly due to the deliberate omission of descriptions of procedural techniques.

Importantly, the authors have managed to provide an authoritative, practical guide to clinical decision making in this rapidly changing area of acute medicine.

Larry P McNicol
Director of Anaesthesia
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Obituary

Charles Edward Marshall
MB BS, DCP, DPath, FCAP, FRCPA, FRCPath

Charles Marshall died peacefully in his sleep at his home in Seattle on 12 November 2005, at the age of 93. He was born on 13 July 1912 in Cowell, South Australia, but his early years were spent with his parents in Scotland and England. In 1929, he returned to Australia and settled in Sydney, where he worked in a pharmacy for 2 years. This led to an interest in medicine, which he studied at the University of Sydney from 1934 to 1940.

During World War II, from 1940 to 1946, he served with the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps in various locations in the Middle East and Australia. After 2 years at the Kanematsu Memorial Institute of Pathology, Charlie began his career as a pathologist at Sydney Hospital. Between 1950 and 1952, he did a postgraduate course in pathology at London University. He then returned to Sydney Hospital, where he spent several years working in bacteriology and anatomical pathology, and also worked as a Teaching Fellow at the University of Sydney from 1953 to 1955.

Charlie was Associate Professor of Pathology at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, from 1955 to 1957, then took up a position as Pathologist (the first ever appointed) at Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound in Seattle, Washington, where he worked for the next 20 years. He also served as Assistant Professor of Pathology at the University of Washington during that time. He was a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia and the College of American Pathologists, and a founding member and Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists of England.

Charlie’s published work included an essay on infectious hepatitis for which he was awarded a British Medical Association prize.1

Friends and colleagues will remember Charlie as an avid painter and musician, a kind and compassionate person, as well as a great friend to many whose lives he touched. He was a true gentleman at all times, with a wonderfully dry sense of humour. We will miss him greatly.

Charlie was married to his wife Thelma from 1941 until her death in 1978. He is survived by his daughter Carol, granddaughter Diana and three great-grandsons, all of Orange County, California.

Carol MacDonald