

and legalities through common situations in ophthalmic practice. Issues pertaining to competence of the patient and the importance of valid consent are elaborated in the first few case scenarios. The duties and responsibilities of optometrist, optician and ophthalmologist, negligence and delayed or missed diagnosis, are depicted in the form of cases

Research in ophthalmology is at the frontline. Several regulations need to be followed by the researcher when conducting a study, including a clinical trial, in order to ensure respect for the autonomy of the participants. The roles of the researcher-doctor, as a researcher and as a doctor, need to be understood. The needs and the role of a research participant-patient are equally important to appreciate. These concerns have been highlighted clearly through case scenarios in this book.

Informal consultations and over-the-counter prescriptions are issues often encountered by professionals without their realising the possible consequences. These issues are covered by the authors through examples in the form of case vignettes.

No surgeon can boast of never having had a surgical complication. When complications occur, issues erupt pertaining to the disclosure of complications to patients,

referral to other doctors, managing another surgeon's complications, and second opinions. These issues are presented here in apt case scenarios.

The professional etiquette to be pursued by optometrists, opticians and ophthalmologists while dealing with each other is extremely important in today's world of competition. Problematic situations may arise due to referrals, differing opinions, overlapping responsibilities and defamation, and have been depicted with suitable case scenarios.

Ethical issues like honouring the privacy of the patient, maintaining confidentiality, disclosure of information and shared confidentiality have been discussed with 'when, how, whom and why' questions in a range of case situations. Finally the role of an eye care professional as a legal witness has been presented with examples.

The book therefore presents itself as a practice guide for eye care professionals in dealing with eye care practice, while safeguarding the interests of eye patients, and of themselves. It may also be referred to by students to understand the basics of ethical and legal issues in ophthalmology.

Spotlight on grey areas

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Catherine Tay, Shirley Ooi. *Medico legal issues in emergency medicine and family practice*. Singapore: McGraw Hill Education; 2008. Pp 168. ISBN: 0071265538A\$ 25.

This book should be a part of induction for all doctors getting into emergency medicine, or any practice, so that they have a good start before diving into an "uncertain grey area". The best things in life are simple. The brilliance of this book lies in its simplicity and the common scenarios which are easy to identify with.

The emergency room is a place of high uncertainty. The patients and scenarios can be as varied as they can get. This book can give the emergency physician clarity of thought in times of uncertainty, when/he has to react within minutes and at odd hours. Though there are many variations in laws and cultures across the globe, a written guide about what is best to do in a given scenario is definitely handy.

The topics covered are not traditionally taught in medical schools (at least in India). The most vulnerable doctor facing such scenarios would be the least experienced. Hence it

becomes imperative for newly graduated doctors to be equipped with the knowhow. In this era of litigation, it is important for doctors to be good at documentation and communication (again not taught well in medical schools) which this book touches on those aspects which free every doctor to practise without the stress of being sued.

I especially liked the part of the book that talks about impending lawsuits. We need not think like lawyers, but we still need to be prepared for all possible questions about the case and have all the necessary supporting documentation. The book emphasises that the more the documentation, the less the chances of a lawsuit. Generally, basic life support training is given to all staff joining a major hospital. Yet most doctors are anxious about being legally liable for damage done when rendering emergency care to a patient. In another case scenario, the book makes the simple but often overlooked point that one should just follow the protocol.

The authors must be congratulated on their efforts to produce this simple and essential reference book which has turned the spotlight on troublesome areas in emergency medicine.