

# ABC<sub>of</sub> Clinical Communication

Edited by Nicola Cooper and John Frain



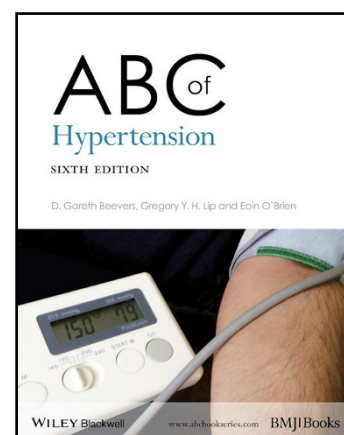
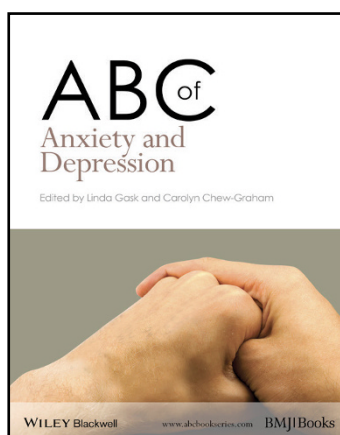
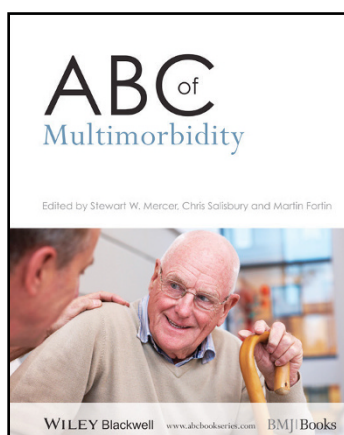
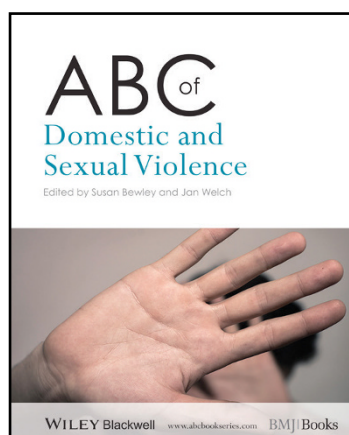
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# Clinical Communication

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# Preface

Good clinical communication is essential for safe patient care. Clinical communication occurs within the patient encounter, but also through information flow within and between clinical teams. Issues around communication account for the majority of complaints about patient care.

The last quarter of a century has seen the establishment of an evidence base for good communication skills and the teaching and assessment of it. We are now better placed to identify and to demonstrate the qualities required for effective communication with the range of patients and professionals encountered in clinical practice. Communication is a core part of curricula within medical schools. Students trained in the early days of these programmes are now practitioners and teachers themselves, meaning the practice and role-modelling of these skills are gradually increasing.

This book is intended as a reference for healthcare students and practitioners, either as part of a communication skills course or for personal study. Issues around clinical communication relate to skills required within the consultation, for

communication within and between teams, in medical records and during handover.

Clinical communication concerns not only establishing rapport with patients and ensuring patient satisfaction with the encounter on a human level – it also means actively listening to patients and understanding their experience and perspective on the anatomical and physiological changes that may constitute pathology and disease. Detailed gathering of hard clinical data reduces the risk of diagnostic error and leads to better treatment and management decisions.

Although this book inevitably reflects our own work in the UK's National Health Service, we are pleased to have brought together a range of international authors, all of whom are recognised experts in their fields. It has been a pleasure to edit this book and in the process to understand better the development of our own communication with patients, students and colleagues. We hope you enjoy and learn from it.

Nicola Cooper & John Frain  
January 2017