professional development.

The seeds of Clinical Governance are already sown in primary care. One of the major factors, it is suggested, will be to increase the importance of evidence based practice so that practitioners are more aware of recommended best practice, and either adopt it or alternatively justify why they are not doing so. Whichever course of action is taken

there will be a need to have appraised the evidence. This book can be highly recommended as a very useful guide to the approach. If used as intended, by working through the identified examples, it will serve as a sound basis for an evidence based practice approach. This would probably be through the development and introduction of evidence based guidelines and protocols.

Derek Richards
Editor

Expert research definitions

Dictionary of Evidence-Based Medicine.

Alain Li Wan Po

1998 Radcliffe Medical Press
ISBN 1 85775 305 4

This helpful little dictionary is the product of the Centre for Evidence-based Pharmacotherapy at the University of Nottingham. The evidence-based health care movement has produced a number of its own terms and ideas and also draws on other areas of health sciences. This dictionary aims to provide a helpful glossary of these terms which derive from epidemiology, biostatistics and health economics in addition to newly recognised terms from evidence-based health care. The dictionary is aimed at research students

and has a not unexpected bias towards pharmacological terms, and many of these would be of no direct interest to dental practitioners.

Most of the definitions are clear and concise. However a number of the definitions of economic and statistical terms are too concise, giving equations with little or no explanation. This results in technically correct definitions, which convey little illumination to the reader. For many readers this will necessitate turning towards more definitive specialist texts for further clarification. In this regard several of the definitions contain useful references and web links. There is one inclusion in the dictionary that I find intriguing; that for EFTA the European Free Trade Association, for which I cannot see a link with evidence-based medicine, and I imagine that there may be other inclusions with which others will disagree.

The bottom line of course is would I buy it. It is definitely a book for dipping in and out of, however, as many of its statistical and economic definitions are a little 'academic' it is probably a book for the larger library or the keener evidence-based practitioner to dig into for reassurance rather than the occasional or novice user. The novice may find one of several electronic glossaries which are freely available on the web more helpful, although more narrowly focused, than this dictionary.