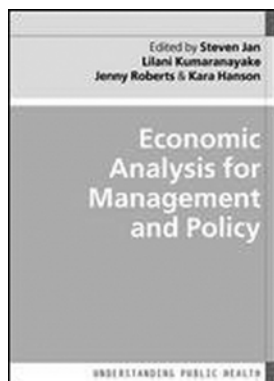


Book Reviews

Economic analysis for management and policy
Jan S, Kumaranayake L, Roberts J, Hanson K,
Archibald K
Open University Press, 2005
ISBN: 0335218466. RRP: \$52.95, 208 pages

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT introductory text aimed at the public health practitioner, policy maker, health manager and clinician. It is divided into five key sections, namely, *key economic concepts,*



demand production and costs, markets, market failure and regulation, contracts and agency and finally, equity in health care. Each section is divided into a number of chapters that commence with an overview, learning objectives and key terms. One of the pleasing aspects of

this text is that it is written in an easy-to-read style and makes good use of exercises and feedback sections to promote understanding. Additionally, there is good use of diagrams to support the simple explanations of key theoretical concepts. The authors should be congratulated in turning what can be relatively dry subject matter into a thoroughly enjoyable and useful experience. Another pleasing aspect was the inclusion of two chapters that deal specifically with concepts of equity in the provision of health services and the trade-off between efficiency and equity in health care decision making.

If there could be any criticism of the text it would be that there could have been greater use of case studies to illustrate practical applications of health economic concepts and theory.

Reviewer rating: ★★★★★

Really managing health care
Iles V, Cranfield S.
2nd edition, Open University Press, 2005
ISBN: 0335210090. RRP: \$74.95, 283 pages

THIS TEXT ATTEMPTS to be a “how to” manual for health care managers. It offers an approach to management based around the personal observations and beliefs of the author. The book is divided into nine chapters and covers aspects of “really managing” people, change, yourself, resources and organisations. While the book is easy to read, the homespun remedies are not adequately supported with theory and research. It is therefore not surprising that the book predominantly tells the reader what to do rather than why it should be done that way. The solutions and approaches offered by the book are somewhat simplistic and a number of the examples questionable. The case studies that are included



in the penultimate chapter were useful. The continual use of the words “really managing” became over-use. This was a major distraction, and it seemed to trivialise the difficult task of managing in today’s health care environment. This text may be useful for junior health managers or those

entering management. It would be difficult to recommend this book as a serious reference text and one that should be in the reference “toolkit” of today’s health services manager.

Reviewer rating: ★★

Monograph: Getting the message across: the mass media and the response to AIDS

Armstrong S

UNAIDS — Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, 2005

ISBN: 92 9 1734565 9. RRP: Free of charge, 56 pages

THIS PUBLICATION is part of the wider UNAIDS Best Practice Collection and provides an extremely interesting and important insight into the use of the media in response to HIV/AIDS in South Africa. It examines the importance of media in the treatment, discourse and response to HIV/AIDS. The examination of the use of the media in the response to AIDS provides an interesting dichotomy, as “the media reflect as well as shape culture and social norms.” (p.5) The monograph assesses the contribution of the media as a conduit to air public concerns as well as providing accurate information to challenge the stigma and discrimination of HIV/AIDS. Quotes from in-depth interviews from a wide

range of people working on the front line in South Africa complement the examination of how media technology can be harnessed in public health campaigns. The publication looks specifically at “Soul City” and the use of the media to create a model of “edutainment”. It also addresses the lessons of experience and how to improve the use of media to get the message across.

An excellent publication for those interested in studying medical marketing and mass media, or use as a case study into using a range of media approaches to address population health initiatives. Best of all it is free of charge and available through <http://data.unaids.org/publications/irc-pub06/jc1094-mediasa-bp_en.pdf>

Reviewer rating: ★★★★★

Dr Gary E Day

Book Review Editor
Australian Health Review



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