

and the talk of change at the Midwives section. A time when women suffered the indignity of enemas, pubic shaves, episiotomies and limited choice for place to deliver. Women were even required to write a letter to have their husband present in the delivery room! A service that would encourage any newly graduated midwife to walk away and say—if that is midwifery and if that is what having a baby is about then why would you want a bar of either? Change was inevitable, supported by professionals within the service, and women and families for whom the service is all about.

As a midwife I have found the record of events interesting reading and a forum for reflection and insight into the turnaround of what was certainly a very

unfriendly maternity service to one with new achievements and challenges.

The author captures the feeling of grief felt by GP obstetricians who are no longer part of the maternity service; however she misses the opportunity to provide positive steps forward. Hands up those who have been to their GP needing attention only to be left in the waiting room while they dash off to deliver a baby? Perhaps there was also a need for general practice to change, and find new ways to rebuild the relationships with their patients in a different manner, to maintain that holistic approach to family medicine and create the important links with the new maternity service. I believe Dr Exton has inadvertently exposed a missed opportunity for primary care.

A good read for health professionals who would like to recall the events of NZ's changing maternity services. A rather negative read for consumers who are the beneficiaries of the change and remain unable to assess the current system through lack of data. A reminder to midwives the challenges have been and continue to be extreme. And to GPs, who are critically placed to ensure primary care is seamless, efficient and continuous, this book provides reason to look at new ways.

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The Baby Business can be ordered through www.craigpotton.co.nz

The New Zealand Pregnancy Book: A guide to pregnancy, birth and a baby's first three months

3RD EDITION

By Sue Pullon and Cheryl Benn

Review by **Jon Wilcox**, GP

At first glance the latest edition of this venerable 20-year-old matter-of-fact guide for new parents looks very different from earlier versions. It immediately seems more user friendly and the layout is now more upmarket—there is an abundance of colour photography and excellent illustrations. Wellington GP Sue Pullon has changed the approach a little to perhaps steer away from the perceptually 'medicalised' editions we might have been more familiar with during the infamous years of what some might call the de-commissioning of general practice obstetrics. The market is now unashamedly—and probably in order of preference—midwives and mothers.

Overall the new edition is excellent and I feel it is good value for new parents. There is accurate information on a huge range of important issues relating to preparing for pregnancy and childbirth, including parental leave, benefits, new maternal serum screening initiatives and so forth. Generally the information is of high quality and, even though the book now could give the impression of being just another 'touchy feely' publication to peruse during the last four weeks of pregnancy, it still has the excellent practical content relating to real life issues such as common problems in pregnancy, labour and childbirth. Having been written from the standpoint of a clinician with a lot of experience in obstetrics and neonatal paediatric care, the advice is generally extremely sensible and very comprehensive.

Furthermore, Pullon does not give the reader the misleading impression that almost all pregnancies and labour are normal (which can tend to give many mothers feelings of inadequacy or failure) and, as many of us who are still actively involved in intra-partum care know, each and every labour has its own idiosyncrasies.

Pullon has joined with midwife Cheryl Benn to produce the new format and by and large it has been an excellent team effort. I have for 20 years recommended this book to all my own maternity patients, and for those with limited resources we have even had a cache of secondhand editions to loan for the duration of pregnancy. I would certainly continue to endorse the latest edition as first choice for NZ GPs to recommend to their expecting client couples.

Review by **Ms Helen Ride**, midwife

This is the third edition of Pullon and Benn's *New Zealand Pregnancy Book*. Since it was first published in 1991 there have been many changes within the delivery of maternity care in New Zealand with the introduction of the Lead Maternity Care system. This third edition has been written for New Zealand parents and parents-to-be and includes information specific to the New Zealand maternity system, and all New Zealanders. The aim of the authors is to present a book which prepares the reader, her partner and family for the pregnancy, birth and the first three months of the baby's life.

This book is written chronologically from planning for a pregnancy through to the first three months with your baby, and provides vast amounts of information which appears to cover everything the reader would wish to know. It includes the physical and emotional changes occurring within the pregnant

woman, common health problems, potential problems and the birth. The format of the book is very appealing to the reader. The photographs are beautiful, the diagrams are excellent and the personal stories complete the experience. The reader can dip in and out of the book choosing specific topics or stages within the pregnancy to read, and cross-referencing is made throughout the book for further information.

This is a very informative book. However, there is very little reference to homeopathy throughout the text but there is a reference within the appendix to the homeopathy website. I am aware that quite a few midwives use homeopathy and many women are interested in this during their pregnancies yet there was very little information within the book.

As a former Bereavement Support Midwife I have a particular interest in the care and support of bereaved parents. One error that I found within this book is the information that a baby born dead

before 28 weeks gestation does not need a funeral. However the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registrations Act 1995 redefined what constituted a still birth and changed it to a foetus born after 20 weeks gestation or weighing over 400 grams. Babies in this category are legally required to have a funeral.

I found this book to be informative and great to read. Many first-time parents will enjoy reading it from cover to cover. The beautiful photographs add to the pleasurable experience.

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The New Zealand Pregnancy Book is available to health professionals at 20% discount off the recommended retail price (\$44 rather than \$54.99).

Ideological Debates in Family Medicine

By Stephen Buetow and Tim Kenealy

Review by **Professor Marjan Kljakovic**, School of General Practice, Rural, & Indigenous Health, Australian National University Medical School, Canberra, Australia

This is a book written for the academic who likes to ponder ideological debates that occur within the field of family medicine. The book would also appeal to people who want a comprehensive way of looking at the world of general practice and primary health care.

The book presents a collection of ideas about family medicine around 13 debates, each of which was written in

two chapters posing the affirmative and negative position on a theme. Each theme began with the words 'Family Medicine should...' and then continued with the following words: 'Refine its essential attributes; Rediscover a focus of family care; Emphasise population on health care; Focus on the sick; Encourage its clinicians to sub-specialise; Tolerate uncertainty to manage clinical risk; Use more Evidence Based Medicine than at present; Shift attention from rationality to emotions; Encourage the development of Luxury Practices; Promote the delivery of care through group practice; Emphasise the Provision of Health Care as a social good; Promote the optimal au-

tonomy of patients in decision making; And finally, Self-regulate to best protect patient and professional autonomy'.

The aim of giving ideological perspectives is to offer change in the field of family medicine through a normative thought process. An ideology is a system of abstract thought applied to public matters, and thus makes this concept central to family medicine. The book has 36 authors who came from different parts of the Western world and therefore gave very different perspectives on particular ideological themes. For example the debate on 'Family Medicine should encourage its specialists to