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“Educating Beginning Practitioners – Challenges for health professional education” Edited by Joy Higgs and Helen Edwards. Oxford: Butterworth – Heinemann; 1999. 303 pages, ISBN 0-7506-3773-0. Recommended retail price: \$103.00.AUD

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BOOK REVIEW

Jeff Allan

***"Educating Beginning Practitioners –
Challenges for health professional education"***

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Continuing education not only meets the needs of individuals but also is an integral process for all professional organizations. The challenges in health care have changed the approach for all health professionals to be more holistic in their educational future in the workplace and academic sector.

This book, "Educating Beginning Practitioners" is a valuable reference for all health care providers in the quest for 'long life learning'. The contributors span a variety of professional backgrounds from which National and international expertise has been collated to provide an insight into experiences in educational research, educational technology and the context of health science education. The final outcome is a book which provides reflection and thought for educational planners, researches and teachers.

The content of this book consists of eight sections, each with its own flavour in the educational process for health professionals.

Section one provides a framework for both qualified health professionals and students entering health care education for the first time, as it explores and presents the nature and key factors influencing this education.

Section two examines the context of health and clinical education today. This section discusses globalisation and social ecology, community and workplace expectations, the relationship between health and education and professional socialisation for health carers.

Section three covers curriculum issues and strategies. These include curriculum models for educating health carers, different pathways to practice, issues and strategies in curriculum management, integration of clinical and academic elements and curriculum accreditation.

Section four looks at student issues, particularly the first year student experience and issues associated with intercultural and international learning in health curricula.

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Section five deals with strategies and issues involved in teaching and learning for health students and educators. It explores learning in the clinical and community settings, practical learning skills, collaborative student learning and educating students for lifelong learning. It takes a holistic overview in the preparation of the health carer for clinical application.

Section six takes a look at the difficult issues associated with student assessment, challenges of assessment and methods of student assessment in the curricula. This highlights the complexity of assessment and provides insight into successful implementation of assessment for the health professional.

Section seven looks at the task of educating the educator. It draws together all of the practical and academic aspects in the challenge of educating educationists. Some topics include a look at research into health professional education, current higher education context for educators, and developing as health professional educators.

Section eight outlines the challenges facing educators and the strategies needed to advance the education of health professions in the future.

This book is well written and is an easy read. The illustrations and diagrams are clear and are easy to interpret and an extensive list of references at the end of each chapter provides the reader with a comprehensive choice for further research.

For those health professionals and educators interested in education, training and self-development, this text should prove to be a valuable source of information to consider for your library collection.