Preface

Welcome to the 6th edition of Practical Paediatrics.

Practical Paediatrics was first published in 1986. The initiative for the development of the textbook came from Professor Max Robinson, a member of the Department of Paediatrics of the University of Melbourne, and Max was the foundation editor. The concept was to provide a paediatric text for medical students that would be user friendly, practical in its approach to learning of the needs of children and their families, relevant to curricula in Australia and New Zealand, the Asia–Pacific region and internationally, be up to date in its information, and available at a reasonable price.

Practical Paediatrics has more than met all of these objectives. There has been a new edition approximately every 4 years and we are pleased now to have the opportunity to publish the 6th edition.

It is a source of pride that the textbook has a very wide international following. It is used by medical students, doctors training in paediatrics and other specialty areas in medicine, primary care practitioners, nurses and allied health trainees and practitioners, and many other health professional groups.

Max Robinson has been an editor of all editions up to and including edition 5. Following his retirement from active academic life, he felt that he should also retire from editorial duties for edition 6. However, he retains an active involvement, with coauthorship of one of the chapters of edition 6. We thank Max for his initiative and for all that he has contributed to Practical Paediatrics. Its success has been due to his strong contributions, knowledge and authorship.

It was a challenge to find someone to match Max Robinson’s enthusiasm and interest. It is a source of great pleasure to Max that Professor Mike South, also of the Department of Paediatrics of the University of Melbourne, agreed to become a coeditor of the 6th edition of Practical Paediatrics. Mike is a general paediatrician and a paediatric intensivist, and has a strong and active interest in evidence-based medicine and evidence-based teaching and learning.

The 6th edition of Practical Paediatrics continues the approach of the preceding editions. In this edition, all content has been revised, often extensively, and there are new sections such as International Child Health, Obesity in Childhood and Adolescence, and Child and Adolescent Gynaecology.

The layout of the textbook has been changed to incorporate sections on topics as components of larger chapters. In edition 6 we welcome many new authors and, as for previous editions, we thank those who have written for Practical Paediatrics in the past.

Reading lists and up-to-date websites that give useful academic and parent and family information have been included as in edition 5. An innovation for this edition, however, is that these, along with the Self Assessment Questions, are now available on a website which is accessible by purchasers of the textbook. This allows easy searching of the reading lists, linkages to the websites, and also linkages to online sections of the textbook itself. There are many new Self Assessment Questions, which have been a popular feature, providing a practical assessment of learning by testing problem-solving skills. The answers to each question are accompanied by a rationale explaining the reasons for the answers.

Many new Clinical Examples have been incorporated to assist the reader place information in context and to aid the learning process. An innovation in edition 6 is the incorporation of highlighted Practical Points in each section to emphasis key issues, and also as an aid to revision.

The 6th edition of Practical Paediatrics is the last to have Ellen Green of Elsevier as commissioning editor. She has been a great friend and mentor, and we wish her the very best in her well-earned retirement. As editors, we owe a great deal to our superb development editor, Dr Lulu Stader. She has continually worked with us to manage, edit and improve the content of this edition (from her workplace in the wilds of the beautiful north-west of Scotland) and we are deeply grateful to her for her patience and expertise.

We hope that you will find this edition of Practical Paediatrics useful, and that it assists with developing an understanding and interest in the health needs of children, their families and their communities.

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