

# EDcare

## Handbook for Emergency Practice

First edition : April 2021



## **Cover Design : Deborah Twining**

Deborah Twining is an Adelaide based multidisciplinary Visual artist, with a strong focus in community based arts practice. With a degree in the Visual arts and a Diploma of education, her career has spanned three states (South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland) over 20 + years. Deborah has worked as a community artist and educator in schools in S.A. and W.A., establishing many collaborative projects between community organisations and Youth at Risk. Her work with marginalised youth became her focus and she received much recognition for her achievements in this field, including The Queens Trust of Australia Award.

Her personal work often reflects medical practices and the relationships between mind, body, community and the intricacies of the human spirit. Exhibiting in numerous institutions in W.A. and S.A. including a large group exhibition, 'Art, Medicine and the Body', at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art and more recently a solo exhibition, 'When Tales are long and often turn corners', at the Hahndorf Academy, a portrayal of Nurse Bertha Schmidtke and the 100 yr anniversary of her establishment of the Ambleside Hospital. Her interest in the fabric of social and cultural humanity continues to see her draw from the human body as a source of inspiration, inquiry and knowledge.

Deborah's studio base is at the Hahndorf Academy, in the Adelaide Hills, Bukartilla, Peramangk country. Here she enthusiastically runs an art school for children, continues her personal arts practice and works on many community based workshops and events, including the annual Adelaide Writers Week Kids Day Arts activation.

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## Handbook for Emergency Practice

**Dr Peter Stuart MPH FACEM**

**First Edition : April 2021**



**This book is dedicated to the health professionals working in EDcare**

Though our work is challenging, we can aspire to bring  
our compassion, knowledge and experience to care.

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Medical knowledge is continually changing in response to research and clinical experience. The authors and peer reviewers have made every effort to ensure the information and drug doses meet with the current standards of medical practice. However, in view of the possibility of human error or changes in practice or local protocols, readers are advised to check the most current information contained provided on procedures or drugs with the manufacturer of each product and their local clinical guidelines to verify the recommended dose or formula, the method and duration of administration and contraindications.

It is the responsibility of the individual clinician, based on their clinical experience and knowledge of each patient to make diagnoses, to determine drug doses and decide on the best treatment for an individual patient and to take all appropriate safety precautions. Neither the authors nor the publisher assume any liability for any injury and/or damage to persons or property arising out of or related to any use of the material contained in this book.

## **Preface**

One of the major challenges for doctors and nurses working in emergency medicine is the breadth of diseases and injuries they encounter. These range from treating eye conditions that may threaten a patient's sight, to severe infections that threaten life. They include recognising and initiating emergency treatment for the severely dehydrated, vomiting adolescent from, as yet undiagnosed type 1 diabetes, the patient with a blocked blood vessel that may lead to loss of a leg, a stroke or a heart attack, the patient whose depression has caused them to try to end their life and the woman who presents with life threatening bleeding from a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy.

The list of potential emergency presentations is almost limitless and includes severe asthma, airway obstruction, anaphylaxis, life-threatening nose-bleeds, dislocated joints and fractures, bowel obstruction or perforation, severe trauma and burns and patients whose hearts beat dangerously fast or too slow threatening blood flow to the brain.

While the scope of emergencies is wide, the other major challenge is that countless life-threatening diseases and injuries are very uncommon; some so rare that they may be encountered only once or twice in a clinician's career.

How can a doctor or nurse retain the knowledge to recognise and manage the large number of conditions they encounter and even more importantly, how can they keep up to date with advances in their diagnosis and management? This is where this bedside guide becomes so valuable.

This handbook is an essential resource to clinicians working in emergency, to assist them to recognise and treat patients presenting with serious diseases and injuries. It incorporates detailed summaries of the latest research and guidelines for the management of medical emergencies, written specifically to provide immediate support and guidance.

As our Federal Member I would like to pass on the enormous gratitude of our community for your invaluable work in saving our lives.

**Rebekha Sharkie**

**Member for Mayo**

# Contents

<b>Part 1: Emergency Presentations</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Abdominal Pain	1
2. Anaphylaxis (1) : Clinical Management Summary	2
3. Anaphylaxis (2) : Paediatric Drug Doses / Infusions	3
4. Antibiotics in Serious Infections, Febrile Neutropenia and Sepsis	4, 5
5. Asthma (1) : Clinical Management Summary	6
6. Asthma (2) : Paediatric Drug Doses / Infusions	7
7. Burns	8
8. Cardiac Chest Pain	9
9. Closed Head Injury on Anticoagulants	10
10. Croup	11
11. Diabetic Ketoacidosis / Hyperglycaemia in Adults	12
12. Diabetic Ketoacidosis in Children	13, 14
13. Electrical Injury and Electrocutation	15
14. Epistaxis	16
15. Febrile Neutropenia	17
16. Gastroenteritis (1) : Clinical Management Summary	18
17. Gastroenteritis (2) : Paediatric Nasogastric/Intravenous Tables	19
18. Headache / Migraine	20
19. Paracetamol Poisoning	21
20. Pulmonary Embolism	22
21. Pulmonary Oedema	23
22. Renal Colic	24
23. Sepsis (1) : Adult Patient	25
24. Sepsis (2) : Paediatric Patient	26
25. Status Epilepticus (1) : Clinical Management Summary	27
26. Status Epilepticus (2) : Paediatric Drug Doses / Infusions	28
27. Syncope	29
28. Tonsillitis / Quinsy	30
29. Warfarin reversal	31

<b>Part 2. Emergency Procedures</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Fascia Iliaca Nerve Block	33
2. Intranasal Sedation / Analgesia	34
3. Mechanical Ventilation	35
4. Medical Clearance in Mental Health	36
5. Non-invasive Ventilation : CPAP – BiPAP	37
6. Procedural Sedation	38
7. Rapid Sequence Intubation	39, 40
8. Risk Assessment in Mental Health	41
9. Sedation of the Agitated Patient	42
<b>Part 3 : Adult Emergency Medications and Infusions</b>	
1. Adrenaline, Amiodarone	44
2. Droperidol, Gentamicin	45
3. GTN, Isoprenaline	46
4. Ketamine, Labetolol	47
5. Levetiracetam, Magnesium, Metaraminol	48
6. Morphine / Midazolam (M&M), Naloxone, Noradrenaline	49
7. Olanzapine, Tenecteplase, Tranexamic Acid	50
<b>Part 4 : Paediatric Resuscitation</b>	
1. Paediatric Resuscitation	52
2. Paediatric Emergency Drugs and Infusions	53, 54
<b>Part 5 : Advanced Life Support</b>	
1. Adult Advanced Life Support (ANZCOR Flow Chart)	56
2. Paediatric Advanced Life Support (ANZCOR Flow Chart)	57
3. Newborn Life Support (ANZCOR Flow Chart)	58
<b>Glossary</b>	59
<b>References</b>	60
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	63