Neonatal and Perinatal Screening

Edited by T S S Lam and C P C Pang
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This monograph aims to provide information on neonatal and perinatal screening by selecting topics of regional interests. Important topics such as hypothyroidism, G6PD deficiency, thalassemia and congenital infections are therefore included. The book therefore serves as a good source for reference to these disorders.

The book also records the screening programmes of various countries in the Asian Pacific area. Health care planners should be able to gain an insight of the work done in the respective countries. They are able to see how the screening programmes are organised and managed, and the problems or difficulties of implementing these programmes. Workers should be aware that Japan has taken a leading role in providing laboratory training to nations seeking assistance.

Though many new screening technologies have been mentioned, many developing countries will find it difficult to acquire these. There is a need for rapid and inexpensive screening tests. Also, rare disorders such as Wilson's Disease, the prevalence of which is about 1:30,000 to 34,000 has been mentioned. Included in the discussion also were other rare disorders such as Maple syrup urine disease (36 in 10 million tested infants) and Duchenne muscular dystrophy, etc. One may be able to diagnose these rare disorders in the institutions. Nevertheless, there should be more emphasis in mass neonatal screening programmes for commoner diseases. These rare disorders may not be relevant in many countries.

It was mentioned that the incidence of various metabolic disorders in Japan was provided in Table I (page 61). These data were actually missing.

The section on Prospects is worthy of note as it is relevant to Asian-Pacific countries.

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