The Obstetric Hematology Manual

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Preface

This book aims to appeal to both those who have already submersed themselves in the field of obstetric haematology and new-comers to the area. Many have already discovered the numerous challenges and dilemmas involved but also have found this area of medicine to be both stimulating and rewarding. Others may be new to the field or have unwittingly found themselves regularly involved in the care of these women. We hope that all will benefit from this manual, which reflects up-to-date clinical management of this complex group of patients as they present in clinical practice.

The impact of haematological disease on fertility, pregnancy and the puerperium can be considerable. Thrombosis and haemorrhage are the leading causes of maternal mortality and a large number of haematological conditions are associated with fetal loss. Advances in fetal maternal medicine and obstetric care has enabled high expectations of fetal survival and maternal wellbeing. However the stakes are high, management can be complex and good outcomes require excellent multidisciplinary team work.

New challenges arise in the light of changing cosmopolitan populations, including rising birth rates and improved survival and fertility from chronic illnesses and life-threatening conditions. Thus in-depth understanding is required to deal with this broad range of disease. We are fortunate to have such a distinguished group of contributors, whose knowledge, experience and opinions are invaluable, particularly in an area where randomised clinical trials are scant and good quality evidence hard to find.

This branch of medicine is gaining increasing recognition as a subspecialist area, with the growth of national and international specialist groups and development of educational courses in the area. Clinical problems have become an important feature in postgraduate examinations, both in haematology and obstetrics. This book is therefore not only an important guide for practitioners in haematology, obstetrics, midwifery, and obstetric anaesthesia but is invaluable for those studying for postgraduate examinations.

Obstetric haematology is immensely rewarding, and we hope this book provides encouragement, particularly for those who are new to the speciality, to view it as both thought-provoking and enjoyable.

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