

The DRCOG Revision Guide

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The DRCOG Revision Guide

Examination Preparation and Practice Questions

THIRD EDITION

SUSAN WARD

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Foreword – I

This book, first published in 2014, provides an extremely valuable adjunct to revision for candidates preparing for the DRCOG examination. It has been updated most recently to align with the changes made to the DRCOG syllabus in 2020. The knowledge required is outlined in detail within the seven specified Modules which make up the syllabus. The two DRCOG examination papers now comprise single best answer (SBA) questions alone. In order to prepare successfully for the examination, it is essential to complement revision and become familiar with the specific format and style of questions. This revision guide provides a systematic approach to tackling sample SBA questions covering all areas of women's health relevant to a competent general practitioner (GP) working in the UK. It facilitates the vital question practice necessary for exam success and is written by those who have experience in both writing and setting examination questions for the DRCOG. It also provides detailed explanations along with the answers, helping candidates to focus their revision and appreciate any deficits in knowledge. The additional mock examination in the book provides assistance in fine-tuning time management skills in addition to assessing a knowledge overview of the syllabus. Overall, this is an excellent, relevant and up-to-date guide which provides the key to success in the DRCOG examination.

- Given the recent changes made to the DRCOG syllabus and Examination format, it is essential that the Revision Guide is updated to reflect these changes.
- The author, Dr Susan Ward, is currently the Vice President of Education for the RCOG with longstanding educational roles relevant to women's health. Her particular interests in the DRCOG have spanned many years and her expert knowledge, experience and reputation in this area make her an ideal author for such a book.
- There are a number of available DRCOG revision books aimed at DRCOG candidates, but to my knowledge, none are written by individuals who have sat on the DRCOG committee. These medical professionals are practising clinicians who have experience in writing, editing and setting questions specifically for the DRCOG examination.
- This Revision Guide complements other revision textbooks with the added benefit of providing numerous sample questions with detailed answers, essential for preparation for the DRCOG examination.

Dr Aradhana Khaund, MD FRCOG
Chair of the RCOG DRCOG Subcommittee 2017–2020

Foreword – II

Since meeting Susan Ward I have been consistently impressed by her in-depth knowledge of women's health issues; by her desire and commitment to helping the next generation of doctors develop their knowledge and skills; and by her respectful, compassionate and collaborative approach to caring for women. I am delighted that she has captured some of her expertise in this book. Susan draws not only on her extensive knowledge of women's health, her years of experience within specialist education and as a Head of School, and her decade of working with RCOG exams, but also on her understanding of what women need in their relationship with their healthcare professionals. For those who are interested in developing skills and making a difference in women's health, this book will prove to be invaluable.

Women's health issues are brought to GPs' attention daily, and these practitioners play a vital role in the health journeys of girls and women during their whole life-course. Many women will, in all probability, have spent time self-managing symptoms, juggling their other responsibilities and pondering if their concerns are really worth medical attention, whilst searching varying sites online for information before visiting their GP. Because of the sensitive nature of many women's health issues and the fact that many women can feel embarrassed to discuss these, it is essential that women have a relationship of trust with their GP. Knowing that their GP has both knowledge and skills in women's health is essential in building this relationship of trust.

GPs are important for women throughout their lives, particularly when women need to navigate the challenges of sexual, reproductive and menopausal health issues. A woman is looking for her GP not only to be the gate-keeper to specialist services but also to be a supportive partner in diagnosis and treatment options, and to provide the knowledge, skills and assistance a woman might need to reach a personal, informed decision regarding her condition, circumstances and care. Women's health issues can be deeply personal and sensitive. Women need their GP to have both knowledge and expertise, and an understanding of the courage required for them both to share their concerns and to then endure what can be quite uncomfortable and undignified procedures in the quest for answers. A woman needs to be accepted as the expert about her own body; her reporting of symptoms needs to be understood and taken seriously; and her feelings, views and voice need to be both listened to and valued. A GP who is able to do this – whilst displaying understanding and compassion, and ensuring that the woman feels comfortable – can make a huge difference to the life of a woman and her health outcomes.

The Diploma of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists is a highly valued marker of excellence, signifying that clinicians have an in-depth understanding of women's health issues. Studying for the DRCOG can be challenging due to the complexity in women's health and to busy work schedules. Dr Susan Ward has drawn on her extensive clinical knowledge and experience to provide clear and thoughtful content as well as an understanding of the

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DRCOG examination process and what examiners are looking for from successful candidates. This book will provide an excellent resource for any clinician with an interest in women's health and a desire to develop their knowledge and the clinical problem-solving skills needed to help improve the health outcomes and wellbeing for women and girls.

Maria Viner
Member of the RCOG Women's Network
and CEO of Mothers for Mothers, Bristol, June 2020

Acknowledgements

Several of the questions were written by Lisa Joels, Elaine Melrose and Srinivinda, all of whom have worked for the RCOG on the Diploma examination. Their contribution is much appreciated.

Abbreviations

ABC	Airway, breathing, circulation
AFP	Alpha fetoprotein
APH	Antepartum haemorrhage
BV	Bacterial vaginosis
CIN	Cervical intra-epithelial neoplasia
CNST	Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts
COC	Combined oral contraceptive
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid
CTPA	Computed tomography pulmonary angiogram
CVS	Chorionic villus sampling
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DRCOG	Diploma of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
EC	Emergency contraception
ECG	Electrocardiogram
ECV	External cephalic version
FBC	Full blood count
FBS	Fetal blood sampling
FSRH	Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health
GBS	Group B streptococcus
GI	Gastro-intestinal
GP	General practitioner
GTT	Glucose tolerance test
HAART	Highly active anti-retroviral therapy
HSG	Hysterosalpingogram
HVS	High vaginal swab
HyCoSy	Hystero-salpingo contrast sonography
INR	International normalized ratio
IUFD	Intra-uterine fetal death
IUGR	Intra-uterine growth restriction
LARC	Long-acting reversible contraceptive
LMWH	Low molecular weight heparin
MSV	Mauriceau-Smellie Veit manoeuvre
NG	Nasogastric
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
O&G	Obstetrics and Gynaecology
PCB	Post-coital bleeding
PCOS	Polycystic ovarian syndrome
PE	Pulmonary embolism
PID	Pelvic inflammatory disease
POP	Progesterone-only pill
PPH	Postpartum haemorrhage
PROM	Premature rupture of the membranes
RCOG	Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

List of Abbreviations

RMI	Risk of Malignancy Index
SCBU	Special Care Baby Unit
SGA	Small for gestational age
TB	Tuberculosis
TED	Thromboembolic disease (prevention compression stockings)
TSH	Thyroid stimulating hormone
UTI	Urinary tract infection
VIN	Vulval intra-epithelial neoplasia
VTE	Venous thromboembolism
WHO	World Health Organisation

Introduction

This volume is not a textbook; it is intended as a guide focussing on question practice for candidates studying for the Diploma of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (DRCOG) examination. It is set out in a format aligned to the DRCOG syllabus with each chapter relating to one of the 7 modules, containing examples of the type of questions that could be asked about that particular subject. As well as becoming more familiar with the style of the examination, candidates can use the specimen questions to assess their knowledge about that section of the syllabus and identify where best to concentrate their revision efforts.

The DRCOG is a clinically orientated examination. Any doctor who has spent a few months in a busy obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G) post will have a good chance of passing after spending some time studying. When choosing which books to use for revision, it is important to realise that the examination is intended to be relevant to doctors working in general practice in the UK, where women's health issues represent a large proportion of the workload. There are many books on the market aimed at candidates revising for DRCOG and also many written for GPs with an interest in women's health.

The questions in this book have been written by consultants who have been on the DRCOG Examination Subcommittee and therefore have previously written questions for the actual examination. As well as making suggestions regarding strategy and technique, we have included lots of examples of single best answer (SBA) questions for each section of the syllabus to give you some idea of the form, content and level of difficulty of the questions you might encounter in the examination. Altogether, there are 430 questions in the book, which we think is good value for the money.

The syllabus was updated in 2020, and the chapters represent each of the 7 sections of the new syllabus. Each chapter contains a collection of SBA questions, which should give you plenty of practice. In addition, there is a separate mock exam in the 2-part format currently used for the DRCOG examination that you could use to practise time management.

In the explanations offered with the answers, we have tried to give you some idea of the thought processes behind each question. These comments are representative of the discussions around the table at the DRCOG Examination Subcommittee meetings where the examination is constructed. The committee consists of a group of obstetricians and gynaecologists with different special interests, a Sexual and Reproductive Health consultant and GPs. Every time a new question is added to the question bank, the GPs are asked to assess whether the content is 'reasonable knowledge that could be expected of a GP with an interest in women's health in the UK' as the committee is keen to avoid setting questions that really should be in the specialty exams instead because they test MRCOG-level knowledge.

Each paper is standard-set by a group of GPs whose work is very valuable to the College, as they are aware of the level of knowledge expected from

candidates sitting the examination. Their input ensures that different diets of the examination are comparable and that it is a fair assessment.

We have tried to give you some suggestions as to where to find the knowledge being tested in the examination. During the meetings where the questions are set, the committee has at its disposal a wide range of textbooks and resources such as the British National Formulary, along with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines and the 'Green-top' Guidelines produced by the College. The RCOG guidelines can be accessed from the RCOG website and would be a good starting point for your revision since some of the questions are set directly from there. It is also worth familiarising yourself with the annual report on Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths in the UK, called the MBRRACE-UK report, which is accessible from the RCOG website or www.npeu.ox.ac.uk. In addition, we have provided a list of other websites where you can find useful information to guide your revision.

We have also added some comments from the 'Women's Voices' group in the College. This group consists of women who give freely of their time to advise the College on the patient's perspective, and they are very active in all aspects of College work, including working groups, committees and examinations. Their presence in the College reminds us why we are all doing this work in the first place.

We hope you enjoy studying for this examination: your patients will certainly benefit from the knowledge you acquire. Good luck!