

explained. A detailed exposition of the levels of economic evaluation is given. The components of evaluation are succinctly summarised in the form of an evaluation protocol.

In the subsequent chapters, the book reviews screening for a whole range of specific diseases and conditions; infective and parasitic diseases, neoplasms, diabetes, diseases of blood, behavioural disorders, glaucoma, cardiovascular diseases, lung diseases, congenital anomalies, disorders of the elderly and multiphasic screening. Evaluation of screening for each disease or condition is briefly summarised, followed by a clear and authoritative statement of recommendations.

The book is well written and easy to follow, but its presentation could have been better. I would have liked a concise table synthesising the recommendations and guiding the reader to the salient points.

A book of this size could not be expected to answer all the less common questions and cannot be used uncritically as a full review, but should be seen as a good, brief guide to preventive screening and will be of value and interest to all those interested in the subject. The opening chapter of the book is essential reading to all practitioners and students of public health.

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## SHORT REVIEWS

**Confronting AIDS: Update 1988.** Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences. (Pp 239; £13.75) Washington DC: National Academy Press, 1988.

The epidemic of books on AIDS almost matches that of the disease. This latest from the Institute of Medicine in the United States is an update of *Confronting AIDS: Directions for public health, health care, and research* which was published in 1986 and provided a comprehensive assessment of what was known about AIDS at that time. About 60 correspondents contributed material to the 1988 update which covers a wide spectrum of topics including the epidemiology and biology of HIV, prevention, medical care, and research needs. A committee at the Institute of Medicine has synthesised this material into a readable and well referenced text which includes recommendations for the future control of the disease.

**Canadian guidelines for healthy weights.** Report of an Expert Group convened by the Health Promotion Directorate. (Pp 126; free of charge) Ottawa: Ministry of Health and Welfare, Canada, 1988.

This is a technical report describing the scientific rationale supporting the selection of new weight guidelines for Canadian adults. It includes the reasons why new guidelines were needed, the process in selecting the body mass index (BMI) and waist-hip ratio (WHR) as indicators, epidemiological reviews of weight surveys, including those based on Canadian data, and recommendations for implementation of the guidelines for healthy weights. This report will be of interest to those concerned with weight and fitness surveys and health promotion. Another document, *Promoting healthy weights: A discussion paper*, has been published in parallel with the technical report with the aim of informing the Canadian public about the problems of weight and of presenting a strategic framework for promoting healthy weights.