

(2) locally produced monoclonal immunoglobulin may also be pathognomonic.

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Book notice

Assessment of Quality of Life in Clinical Trials of Cardiovascular Therapies. Edited by NK Wenger, ME Mattson, CD Furberg, J Elinson. (Pp 400; US \$34.50.) Le Jacq Publishing Inc. 1984.

Viewed from the outside these 374 pages (no pictures) look as daunting as the title. The typeface is, however, vast and much of the book is taken up by references, specimen questionnaires, appendices, and discussions of the main articles. The remainder is not so easy to dismiss, even for thoracic physicians, who might be a little surprised to see this book being reviewed in *Thorax*. Quality rather than duration of life will become increasingly important in medicine as the healthy population ages and we are all already concerned in such decisions in the management of lung cancer. This book gives a good insight into the relatively new techniques of measurement in this difficult field. There are three parts of the book and only the first of these need concern the general reader. The first chapter deals with the philosophical problems of trying to define quality of life and the differences between objective and subjective points of view. It is chastening to see how often the doc-

tor's perception is narrow minded when compared with the patient's or with non-medical opinion. Subsequent chapters discuss ways of applying these ideas to treatment trials and go into the formidable problems of interpretation and methodology. The second and third parts, which are for the specialist reader only, examine methods in detail with examples of the most widely used questionnaires. If only the first part is read the book is reduced to a very readable and fascinating account of new science in the making. The fact that cardiovascular disease alone is discussed does not matter since the concepts are common to many aspects of thoracic disease and the detail is unimportant for all but the expert. Overall the book can be recommended, particularly to those concerned in clinical trials, who may get new insights into just how much can be measured and how one sided are the assessments of many treatments at present.

DMG