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FOR VINNIE AND ALEXANDER
PREFACE

The essential role of the psychiatrist as consultant and educator of primary care physicians is increasing in importance as the American health care system faces fundamental restructuring. In a recent workshop during the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, a number of prominent consultation-liaison psychiatrists reviewed major developments in consultation-liaison psychiatry during the past decade and looked toward the future. This book is based on these presentations, but it is not simply a proceedings book. A number of additional experts have contributed important chapters, and all the chapters based on the presentations are expanded and updated. Thus, this book reviews the current state of consultation-liaison psychiatry and anticipates future challenges. It also informs the reader about the state-of-the-art knowledge and skills in consultation-liaison psychiatry as of 1994.

This book should be a valuable up-to-date overview/refresher for both consultation-liaison psychiatrists and general psychiatrists who wish to update and formulate his/her consultant role. It should be especially valuable for psychiatric residents for whom the role as consultant to primary physicians assumes increasing importance, and for primary physicians and medical students who are interested in learning about commonly encountered complex biopsychosocial problems of their patients and integrating these dimensions in patient care.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry on the
Threshold of a New Century ............................................. 1
Hoyle Leigh

Legal and Ethical Changes in Consultation Psychiatry ..................... 7
Lowell Tong and Craig Van Dyke

Chronic Pain ........................................................................... 29
Jon Streltzer and Byron Eliashof

Chronic Pain and Addiction .................................................... 43
Jon Streltzer

Psychiatric Consultation with Chemically Dependent Patients ............... 53
Stephen R. Griffith

The Dementia Syndrome in Consultation Psychiatry ............................ 77
Robert Hanowell

Psychotherapy Solutions in the Medical Setting ................................ 119
Stuart J. Eisendrath

Physical Factors affecting Psychiatric Condition: A Proposal for a Future DSM .. 127
Hoyle Leigh

Training in Medical Psychiatry .................................................. 133
Scott Ahles

Consultation-Liaison in Child Psychiatry: Continuity and Change
in the Past Decade ................................................................. 161
David A. Fox

Consultation-Liaison 1980-90—The Hawaii Experience .......................... 175
Jon Streltzer

Consultation-Liaison Funding: Issues for Service and Training ............... 181
James J. Strain, George Fulop, and Jeffrey S. Hammer
Computerization and Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry in the 1990's ............ 197
   Seth M. Powsner

A Computerized Database System for Psychiatric and Consultation Records ..... 203
   Hoyle Leigh

Databasing in CLP Psychiatry .................................................. 209
   Jeffrey S. Hammer and James J. Strain

Contributors ............................................................................. 229

Index ......................................................................................... 231