

# JOURNAL OF CLINICAL RESEARCH BEST PRACTICES

Vol. 7, No. 3, March 2011

"Can You Handle the Truth?"

## **"Essentials of Clinical Research"**

**Stephen P. Glasser, editor, 2008, 360 pages, Springer, \$79.95**

**Review by Norman M. Goldfarb**

"Essentials of Clinical Research," despite its name, offers the academic researcher an unusual selection of basic and advanced topics relating to clinical research. The introductory material on clinical trials and statistics is available elsewhere, but not the discussions of research methods for studies of diagnostic tests, genetics and implementation. The book also includes essays on the ancillary but important topics of grant writing, mentoring and advising, presentation skills, and, for the blessed/cursed, dealing with the media.

Implementation research, as one might guess, deals with the problems of moving scientific findings into clinical practice. "One oft-quoted estimate claims that it takes an average of 17 years for even well-established clinical knowledge to be fully adopted into routine practice... In 2003, a landmark study by McGlynn et al. estimated that the American public was only receiving about 55% of recommended care."

The book consists of 22 essays by 18 contributors:

- Clinical Research: Definitions, "Anatomy and Physiology," and the Quest for "Universal Truth"
- Introduction to Clinical Research and Study Designs
- Clinical Trials
- Alternative Interventional Designs
- Postmarketing Research
- The United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA)
- The Placebo and Nocebo Effect
- Recruitment and Retention
- Data Safety and Monitoring Boards (DSMBs)
- Meta-Analysis
- Research Methods for Genetic Studies
- Research Methods for Pharmacoepidemiology Studies
- Implementation Research: Beyond the Traditional Randomized Clinical Trial
- Research Methods for Studies of Diagnostic Tests
- Statistical Power and Sample Size: Some Fundamentals for Clinical Researchers
- Association, Cause and Effect Modification
- Bias, Confounding and Effect Modification
- It's All About Uncertainty
- Grant Writing
- The Media and Clinical Research
- Mentoring and Advising
- Presentation Skills: How to Present Research Results

Dr. Glasser authored or co-authored 18 of the essays. The book is available in bookstores.

**Reviewer**

Norman M. Goldfarb is Managing Director of First Clinical Research LLC, a provider of clinical research best practices information, consulting and training services. Contact him at 1.650.465.0119 or [ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com](mailto:ngoldfarb@firstclinical.com).