All physicians agree that change is inevitable in the practice of medicine. *Practicing Medicine in the 21st Century* is targeted toward medical students, residents, and physicians in a variety of settings. As a practicing physician for over 25 years, I predict that this book will be extremely useful for physicians of all ages and at all stages of their professional careers.

Clearly, the environment of medicine is changing in ways yet to be fully defined or implemented. The editors provide insights into key concerns relating to how we will practice medicine during this century; trends in health care; and potential resolutions to difficult problems.

Like Dr. Nash’s previous 16 multiauthored books, this one is also well organized. The editors reproduce a coherent, concise format in each chapter, and the respective chapter authors retain a unified voice in their individual pieces. This asset makes for interesting reading throughout. Readers can also approach the book chapter by chapter as a reference text for specific questions that arise.

The book is divided into five sections: Clinical Management, Information Management, The Practice Environment, Practice Administration, and Financial Management. Each chapter includes an executive summary, learning objectives, and key words. At the end of every chapter are a case study; study and discussion questions; suggested readings and Web sites; and references.

The first three chapters in Section 1 cover quality of care, patient safety, and pay-for-performance and the daily routine of patient care. The fourth chapter, “Achieving Positive Patient–Physician Relationships,” emphasizes the most important message in the entire book. Despite changes in financing, technology, and shifts in control, the significance of the patient–physician relationship cannot be overemphasized. The editors clearly convey their recommendations for how physicians can adjust their procedures, attitudes, and communication skills. The fifth chapter explores methods of including the patient and a diverse group of health care professionals as part of the health care team.

Section 2 consists of two deftly written short chapters on management. Chapter 6 discusses the role of ambulatory information technology (electronic health records), and Chapter 7 embraces the concept of communication as the “key to good medicine.” Both chapters offer excellent, accessible resources.

In Section 3, six chapters describe essential aspects of medical practice, including from risk management, health care and the law, managed care, Medicare and Medicaid, medical malpractice, and disease-management programs. Each chapter could be expanded into an entire textbook, but the content is easy to read and worthwhile.

Sections 4 and 5 discuss administration and finances. Section 4 introduces the business aspects of medicine: the pros and cons of working in various practice settings (e.g., offices and hospitals); open (advanced) access scheduling of appointments; and the referral process, including authorizations and appeals of denials. Chapter 17, “Practice Innovation,” eloquently describes the challenges of incorporating new ideas.

An “epilogue” covers future trends, demographics, information technology, government programs, Medicare cuts in reimbursements, disease management, and consumerism. The book concludes with a brief index.

Each author’s expertise and viewpoint shine throughout every chapter, and the format makes the entire work a delight to read. I believe that the book’s structure and scope will distinguish it from similar efforts that address the inevitable changes affecting medical practice and how to cope with them.

No one individual, governmental or insurance agency, medical organization, or patient advocacy group can predict the future of medicine. Amid the multitude of forecasts for the transformation of medical practice, *Practicing Medicine in the 21st Century* should serve physicians well as a guidepost for anticipating changes and embracing strategies to thrive in a new world. We are just midway through the first decade of the new century, but this book provides the currency that all physicians, irrespective of their age or number of years in practice, should find useful for many years to come.