FORMAT FOR CLERKING NEW BABIES

As near to a “gold standard” as possible

At medical school we are taught that good clinical methodology requires for each patient a history, examination, assessment and plan. After medical school, history taking seems to fall by the wayside, nowhere more so than for neonates. This is to remind you that history taking is just as important for neonates as for any other category of patient, and to provide a structure for history taking and clerking.

Write the DATE and TIME, and PRINT your name, every time you see the patient

State the reason for admission: The main problems (# list)

Background

Father:
Name, age, occupation, health status

Mother:
○ Name, age, occupation
○ Past Medical History: HIV, medical, surgical, smoking, alcohol
○ Past Obstetric History: gravida, parity, problems (a history of a perinatal death in a previous pregnancy is one of the most important predictors of problems in this pregnancy)

Current

1) Pregnancy
○ Booking date, LMP, EDD (by dates/palpation/ultrasound)
○ HIV (including CD4 & ARV’s, feeding choice), VDRL, Blood group
○ ANC attendance and problems (maternal/foetal)

2) Labour
○ Onset and duration, reason for onset
○ Rupture of membranes (mode and duration)
○ Problems (maternal and foetal)
○ Nevirapine

3) Delivery
○ Mode and reason, presentation, liquor, problems

4) Resuscitation
○ Interventions and response, apgars
○ Doctors and nurses present, by name

5) Examination
○ Weight and estimated gestational age, nevirapine, feeding choice
○ Full neonatal examination (use the checklist on page 2 of the “Infant Care Record”)

6) Assessment:
○ The problem list (this is why you do a history and examination, and the baby needs you to construct a clear and complete problem list)

7) Plans
○ For each listed problem, separately

Continuation

Review active problems as required using the problem specific approach (Subjective; Objective; Assessment; Plan). Think about each problem every day until it is resolved or there is a long term plan. Never allow a problem to fall off the list by default. Never overlook a newly identified problem.

Medico-legal

PRINT your surname at least on the first occasion that you write notes for each baby.