Readings in Gerontological Nursing

Judith A. Allender Cherie L. Rector

Lippincott

Readings in Gerontological Nursing

Edited by

Judith Ann Allender, EdD, RN,C

Professor Department of Nursing School of Health and Human Services California State University Fresno, California

Cherie L. Rector, PhD, RN,C

Associate Professor Coordinator for School Nurse Credential Program Department of Nursing School of Health and Human Services California State University Fresno, California



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Readings in Gerontological Nursing

grandmothers, especially our fondly remembered hardy, resilient, indefatigable role models:

Elizabeth Anna Lutz (1890–1982)

Maria Schuepp (1887–1972)

and

Lula Mae Martin (1893–1983)

Myrtle Maria Beckstead Egbert (1895–1970)

Contributors

Dolores M. Alford, PhD, RN, FAAN

Gerontic Nursing Consultant Dallas, Texas

Robert Atchley, PhD

Director, Scripps Gerontology Center Miami University Oxford, Ohio

Sally Ax, RNC, BSN

Medical Supervisor, Cardiac Program TGC Home Health Care Lakeland, Florida

Nellie C. Bailey, MS, MA, RN, CS

Assistant Professor and Community Health Nurse SUNY-Health Science Center Brooklyn College of Nursing Brooklyn, New York

Susan J. Barnes, RN, MSN

Doctoral Student
University of Texas Health Science
Center
San Antonio School of Nursing
San Antonio, Texas

Amanda Smith Barusch, MSW, PhD

Professor and Director Social Research Institute Graduate School of Social Work University of Utah Salt Lake City, Utah

Margaret Berrio

Coordinator
Quality Management and
Management Information Systems
Nursing Service
Boston Veterans Affairs Medical
Center
Boston, Massachusetts

Gloria Black, RN, CS, MS

Clinical Nurse Specialist for Home Health
South Carolina Department of
Health and Environmental
Control
Appalachia II District
Greenville, South Carolina

Sandra Black, PhD

Assistant Professor Department of Internal Medicine Center on Aging University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston, Texas

Elizabeth Bondy, PhD

Assistant Professor College of Education University of Florida Gainesville, Florida

Lois M. Brandriet, RN, PhD

Assistant Professor College of Nursing Brigham Young University Provo, Utah

Luanne Brogna, RN, MS, CETN

Clinical Nurse Specialist Enterostomal Therapy Hackensack Medical Center Home Health Agency Hackensack, New Jersey

Margaret J. Bull, RN, PhD

Associate Professor University of Minnesota School of Nursing St. Paul, Minnesota

Margaret Burney-Puckett, MSN, RN

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing Nashville, Tennessee

Marybeth Tank Buschman, RN, PhD

Professor, College of Nursing The University of Illinois Chicago, Illinois

Marylea Benware Carr, MS

Women's Studies Mankato State University Mankato, Minnesota

Fen-Lei Chang, PhD, MD

Director of the UCSF
Fresno Alzheimer's Disease Center
Chief of Neurology and
Rehabilitation Service
Veterans' Administration Medical
Center
Fresno, California

Yeou-Lan Duh Chen, PhD, RN

Associate Professor School of Nursing Westminster College Salt Lake City, Utah

Eileen R. Chichin, DSW, RN

Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai School of Medicine New York, New York

Phillip G. Clark, ScD

Professor and Acting Director Program in Gerontology University of Rhode Island Kingston, Rhode Island

Ruby M. Van Croft, RN, MS

Director of Community Affairs Visiting Nurse Association President, Capital Home Health Association Washington, DC

Neal Cutler, PhD

Director, Boettner Center of Financial Gerontology School of Social Work University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Daniel Detzner, PhD

Associate Professor, Family Social Science Department Director, Refugee Studies Center University of Minnesota St. Paul, Minnesota

Steven Devlin, PhD

Associate Director
Boettner Center of Financial
Gerontology
School of Social Work
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Marguerite Dixon, RN, PhD

Retired Dean Chicago State University School of Nursing Chicago, Illinois

Susan E. D. Doughty, MSN, RN, CS, NP

Nurse Practitioner Women to Women Yarmouth, Maine

Jane W. Eckert, MSW, ACSW, LICSW

Assistant Director Social Work Department Beth Israel Hospital Boston, Massachusetts

Naomi Feil, MSW, ACSW

Executive Director Validation Training Institute Cleveland, Ohio

Kathleen Fletcher, RN, CS, MSN, GNP

Clinician, Individual Care Services University of Virginia Health Sciences Center Charlottesville, Virginia

Marquis D. Foreman, PhD, RN, FAAN

Associate Professor and Clinical Chief Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing College of Nursing University of Illinois at Chicago Medical Center Chicago, Illinois

Marilyn Frenn, RN, PhD

Assistant Professor Marquette University College of Nursing Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Terry T. Fulmer, PhD, RN-C

Associate Professor Yale School of Nursing Geriatric Clinical Specialist Yale-New Haven Hospital New Haven, Connecticut

May Futrell, PhD, RN, FAAN

Professor, Department of Nursing Lowell's College of Health **Professions** University of Massachusetts Lowell, Massachusetts

Lynda Grant, MA

Doctoral Student Department of Counseling Psychology University of British Columbia Vancouver, British Columbia

Yvonne Lane Gray, MSN, RN

Clinical Instructor and Community Health Nurse College of Nursing State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn Brooklyn, New York

Barbara Karanagh Haight, RN-C, DrPH, FAAN

Professor, College of Nursing Medical University of South Carolina Charleston, South Carolina

Brenda P. Hamel-Bissell, RN, EdD

University of Vermont School of Nursing at Burlington Burlington, Vermont

Iennie Chin Hansen

Executive Director On Lok Senior Health Services San Francisco, California

Kristina Hanson

Policy Analyst Kaiser Commission on the Future of Medicaid City, State

Linda Hewett, PhD

Codirector of the UCSF
Fresno Alzheimer's Disease Center
Assistant Clinical Professor
Departments of Neurology, Family,
and Community Medicine
UCSF/Fresno Medical Education
Program
Fresno, California

Janet R. Hulse, RN, MSN

Clinical Care Coordinator Cornwall Hospital Cornwall, New York

Sally Hutchinson, RN, PhD, FAAN

Professor, College of Nursing University of Florida Gainesville, Florida

Robert L. Kane, MD

Director—Clinical Outcomes
Research Center
Endowed Chair in Long-Term Care
and Aging
School of Public Health
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota

Rita H. Laferriere, RN-C, CS, MS

1992 American Nurse Foundation Scholar Clinical Nurse Specialist Caledonia Home Health Care St. Johnsbury, Vermont

Molly T. Laflin, PhD

Professor of Health Education Bowling Green State University Bowling Green, Ohio

Judith Lave, PhD

Professor of Health Economics Graduate School of Public Health University of Pittsburgh Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Margaline Lazarre, RN, BSN, MS, CCRN

Cardiac Program Coordinator TGC Home Health Care Practice Tampa, Florida

Janet Lee, PhD

Women's Studies Oregon State University Social Science 200 Corvallis, Oregon

Barbara Leeper, RN, MN, CCRN

Clinical Nurse Specialist Baylor Cardiovascular Institute Baylor University Medical Center Dallas, Texas

Maureen Levesque

Staff Nurse, Pulmonary Unit Boston Veterans Affairs Medical Center Boston, Massachusetts

Jeffrey M. Levine, MD

The Jewish Home and Hospital for Aged Bronx, New York The Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai Medical Center New York, New York

Leslie S. Libow, MD

San Antonio, Texas

Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai School of Medicine New York, New York

Adrianne D. Linton, RN, PhD

Associate Professor and Interim Chair Department of Chronic Nursing Care University of Texas Health Science Center

Barbara Lyons, MHS

Associate Director Kaiser Commission on the Future of Medicaid Washington, DC

Judith Malmgren, PhD

Health Services Research Methodologist Providence Health Plans University of Washington Seattle, Washington

Kyriakos Markides, PhD

Professor Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health Center on Aging University of Texas, Medical Branch Galveston, Texas

Theresa Martico-Greenfield, MPH

Jewish Home and Hospital for Aged New York, New York

Mona Martin, RN, MPA

Administrator, Northwest Prevention Effectiveness Center School of Public Health Department of Health Services University of Washington Seattle, Washington

E. J. Matthis, RN, PhD

Freelance Educator Gerontology Consultant Omaha, Nebraska

Mary Ann Matteson, RN, PhD, RAAN

Associate Professor Thelma and Joe Crow Endowed Professor Department of Chronic Nursing University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio School of Nursing San Antonio, Texas

Margo McCaffery, RN, MS, FAAN

Consultant in Nursing Care of Patients With Pain Los Angeles, California

Lorraine C. Mion, PhD, RN

Senior Nurse Researcher Division of Patient Care Operations Cleveland Clinic Foundation Cleveland, Ohio

Margaret F. Moloney, RNC, ANP, PhD

Nurse Practitioner Southeastern Health Services—Prucare Decatur, Georgia

Linda Moneyham, RN, DNS

Assistant Professor Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing **Emory University** Atlanta, Georgia

Michael Mulvihill, DrPH

Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai School of Medicine New York, New York

Richard R. Neufeld, MD

Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai School of Medicine New York, New York

Trixie Newkirk, RN, MS, CCRN

Clinical Nurse Specialist Baylor Cardiovascular Institute Baylor University Medical Center Dallas, Texas

Ray Nicola, MD, MHSA

Acting Deputy Director Public Health Program Office Centers for Disease Control Atlanta, Georgia

Jacqueline S. Nowicki, MSN, BSN, BS Ed, CCRN

Staff Nurse, Surgical Intensive Care Unit Medical College Hospital Toledo, Ohio

Ellen Olson, MD

Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai School of Medicine New York, New York

Christine L. Pasero, RN, BSN

Coordinator of the Pain Control
Column, AJN
Nursing Pain Management
Consultant
Past President and Cofounder of the
American Society of Pain
Management Nurses
Rocklin, California

Michele Puccinelli

Master's Candidate Davis School of Gerontology University of Southern California Los Angeles, California

Veronica Rempusheski, PhD, RN-C

Program Director and Nurse Researcher Gerontological Nursing Beth Israel Hospital Boston, Massachusetts

John Riley Jr., PhD

Consulting Sociologist Chevy Chase, Maryland

Matilda White Riley, PhD

Senior Social Scientist National Institute on Aging National Institute of Health Bethesda, Maryland

Diane Rowland, ScD

Senior Vice President
Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation
Executive Director
Kaiser Commission on the Future of
Medicaid
Washington, DC

Debra A. Schuerman, BSN, RN

Adult Nurse Practitioner Program University of Wisconsin—Madison Graduate School of Nursing Madison, Wisconsin

Cecelia B. Scott, RN,C, PhD

President
Programs Assisting Community
Elders, Inc.
Roswell, Georgia

Ruth Shuttleworth-Diaz, BS, RN

Graduate Student Nursing Administration University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lark Simon, BSN, RN,C

Geriatric Nurse Clinician North Iowa Mercy Health Center Mason City, Iowa

Peter Steen, MA

Project Coordinator and Research Associate Social Research Institute Graduate School of Social Work University of Utah Salt Lake City, Utah

Eileen M. Sullivan-Marx, PhD, RN, CS

Assistant Professor University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Susan C. Shulman, PhD, LICSW

Consultant Harvard University Health Service Arlington, Massachusetts

Anna M. Tichy, RN, PhD

Professor College of Nursing The University of Illinois Chicago, Illinois

Rein Tideiksaar, PhD

Director
Department of Geriatric Care
Coordination
Sierra Health Services, Inc.
Las Vegas, Nevada

Fernando Torres-Gil, PhD

Assistant Secretary for Aging Office of the Secretary U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Washington, DC

Elizabeth Totolos, RN,C, MSN

The Jewish Home and Hospital for Aged Bronx, New York Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development Mount Sinai Medical Center New York, New York

Edward Wagner, MD, MPH

Center for Health Studies Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound Seattle, Washington

Mary G. West, RN, MSN

Associate Chief Nursing Service/Extended Care V.A. Medical Center Nursing Home Care Unit Gainesville, Florida

May Wykle, PhD, FAAN

Florence Cellar Professor and Associate Dean Community Affairs Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing Case Western Reserve University Cleveland, Ohio

Joyce Zerwekh, RN, MA, EdD

Assistant Professor/Director of The Graduate Program School of Nursing Seattle University Seattle, Washington

Preface

The United States has seen dramatic increases in the number and percentage of older adults. It is anticipated that this trend will continue and, within 30 years, the present large number of elderly will double. Life expectancy continues to rise, with some experts in aging professing that humans have a lifespan potential of 120 years. We presently recognize that the population over the age of 85 is the fastest growing age group in America. These demographics have significant implications for the nation, the health care delivery system, and the professionals in health care.

This anthology of readings was developed to enhance the beginning professional's understanding of elders in today's world. The choices made represent the most current and innovative developments in the field and are designed to assist the nurse in understanding the broad field of aging and what caring for elders involves.

The chapters come from over twenty different nursing and interprofessional sources, primarily from the years 1994, 1995, and 1996. One of the chapters was written in 1997 especially for this edition by experts in the field. The 52 chapters included make this text a rich resource for the undergraduate and graduate nursing student. In some courses this text can be used with beginning nursing or medical-surgical nursing texts. It could also be the primary text in a gerontological nursing course. The text can be a handy reference tool to enhance the practice of experienced nurses or nurses new to the field of gerontology. Although it is extensive it does not represent a complete look at aging. The readings selected represent the latest ideas from policy makers, innovative practice models, research methodologies, and situations unique to the aging client, family members, and caregivers. We conclude each unit with a selected bibliography useful to the reader as a supplement to the readings in the text.

Readings in Gerontological Nursing contains 8 units, each covering a major category of concern in gerontological nursing. Unit 1, The Elders Are Coming! The Elders Are Coming! Social Policy Issues and Aging, presents timely pieces that deliberate the future of health care and nursing practice with the elderly. Leaders in gerontology discuss trends in policy formation, financing reform affecting elders, and health care delivery for our aging population. This unit touches on ethical and moral issues surrounding care for elders, especially in the areas of Medicare, Medicaid, family financial responsibility, advance directives, and managed care. It also examines ageist beliefs and practices that lead to ineffective health care.

Unit 2, Promoting Quality of Life and Longevity, presents selected ap-

proaches to enhance wellness and quality of life in the elderly, including use of humor, basing teaching on the elder's life experiences, promoting sexual health, elders' perceptions of being strong and surviving, and looking at menopause holistically as a transitional phase to a healthy last third of one's life.

Unit 3, Age Segregation, Grandparenting, and Ethnicity: Sociocultural Issues in an Aging America, focuses on social and cultural forces that shape the roles of elders in our society. It begins with an examination of age as a segregating factor and the need for greater age integration. It goes on to examine the dynamic role of grandparents and the importance of ethnicity and cultural beliefs in the development of health behaviors. The health beliefs and behaviors of Mexican American and Chinese American elders are described, and the effect that poverty plays in access to health care.

Unit 4, Innovative Programs in Gerontological Nursing, explores selected programs that affect the lives of elders. Chapters on preventative nursing care and a community-based nursing center present ways to provide elder care and focus on wellness. The Omaha Information System, geriatric rehabilitation, and a cardiac rehabilitation model demonstrate organizational systems for ill elders. Older adults in long-term care have their lives enhanced by workshops for women residents and a center on ethics in long-term care.

Unit 5, If I Live to Be 102, Will I Be Able to Tie My Shoes? Theory Development and Research With Older Adults, presents theories on aging and the application of theoretical frameworks to problems or issues of aging, specifically the process of life review and the progression of cognitive decline in dementia patients. Qualitative research methods and validity threats are described, and current research studies that demonstrate these grounded theory and ethnographic approaches are presented. The unit ends with a quantitative evaluation research study on discharge planning.

Unit 6, From Malnutrition to Sleep Problems: Assessing Older Adults, emphasizes the importance of careful assessment and examination of our own thoughts and biases regarding the definition of "quality of life." Additional chapters on the assessment of nutritional status, sleep disturbances, elder abuse, adverse drug reactions, and cognitive functioning in the elderly complete this unit.

Unit 7, Managing Elders With Selected Health Care Issues, presents several common issues that affect the elderly and consequently influence the role of the health care professional. Selections include dealing with elders who have controlling dispositions, the depressed elder, preventing falls in the frail elderly, managing postoperative pain and congestive heart failure effectively, sundown syndrome, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in the elderly, and written for this edition is a chapter on the latest research and therapeutic modalities used with Alzheimer's disease victims and their families.

Finally, Unit 8, Older Adults and Caregivers: Changing Needs and Settings, concludes the contributions in this text and focuses on the transitional needs of elders and their caregivers as the aging process places more demands on family systems and the human body. The chapters focus on

daughter and mother relationships and changing roles, caring for the caregiver, restraint-free care, pressure ulcer management, communicating with the confused old-old client, and the role of hospice nurses who help elders confront death.

The selection of readings flows from the broad view of aging agendas at the national level to promoting wellness and longevity and using innovative programs to enhance the lives of elders at the local level. We then share the need for developing theory and conducting research to continue to expand the knowledge base in gerontological nursing. Tools and specific health issues follow with assessment tools and managing selected health care problems. The text concludes with the changing needs of elders as they are managed in changing settings. This organization follows the broad to specific and wellness to illness approaches, making it useful in nursing programs or nursing courses that use a similar organizational structure.

We are thankful for the individuals who have contributed to the birth of this book. Their willingness to have faith in the need for this publication through their support, suggestions, assistance, and contributions have been invaluable. We especially want to thank Linda Hewett and Fen-Lei Chang for their original work; our many photo subjects—especially the late Elizabeth Schuepp, Gil Allender, John R. Van Doren, Sam Allender, Mike Raphael, Jack and Jewell Egbert, and Tobey and Kelly Wosnik; those who helped with our photographs and manuscript preparation—Zachary Couch, Paul L. Firth, A and V Custom Photo Lab in Fresno, CA., and Benjamin Rector, Darrell Lakey, and Susan Wilson.

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Judith Ann Allender, EdD, RN,C Cherie L. Rector, PhD, RN,C

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