



Gerontological Nursing

F O U R T H E D I T I O N

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Fourth Edition

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Fourth Edition

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Gerontological Nursing

T*his book is dedicated to George Considine,
my mentor, friend, and soulmate,
who generously offered support, patience, and inspiration.*

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Preface

Since the first publication of *Gerontological Nursing*, nearly two decades ago, there has been an exciting evolution in the specialty of nursing older adults. In the early developmental stage of gerontological nursing, the challenge was to ensure that caregivers understood and incorporated into practice the unique norms, needs, responses, and rights of the elderly. As basic competency increased, gerontological nurses were faced with developing roles in new settings, such as adult day care and retirement communities, and protecting and advocating for the rights of elders as cost-containment and rationing became major influences on health-care practices. Now, as a new century nears, gerontological nurses are challenged with demonstrating leadership in defining and directing health-care services for the well and ill elderly that promote healing and the care of the mind, body, and spirit, rather than merely the treatment of symptoms.

This fourth edition of *Gerontological Nursing* intends to provide core knowledge for gerontological nursing. The book is divided into five units. Unit I, Overview of Gerontological Nursing, discusses the development and foundations of gerontological nursing, the variety of roles and settings in which gerontological nurses find themselves, and facts about the aging population. Unit II, The Aging Population, reviews theories of aging and unique characteristics of older adults in regard to cultural diversity, lifestyle adjustments, and common aging changes. Unit III, Health and Wellness, uses the self-care theory as a framework to lay a foundation for gerontological nursing practice as various aspects of health promotion and maintenance are discussed. Common illnesses of the aged and related nursing considerations are addressed in Unit IV, Common Geriatric Disorders. The final section, Unit V, Gerontological Care Issues, reviews special concerns in delivering services to older adults such as helping patients cope with chronic illness, legal and ethical considerations, rehabilitative aspects of care, acute-care needs, family caregiving, death and dying, and challenges of the future.

In addition to an update of core gerontological nursing knowledge, this edition includes discussions of alternative therapies that could be useful in health promotion, disease management, and healing efforts. With more than one third of Americans utilizing alternative health practices, all health care providers are challenged to be prepared to assist clients in evaluating, selecting, and utilizing nontraditional health care approaches. Nurses, who have long used (however covertly and subtly) intuition, touch, suggestion, and compassion in their practice, now have growing evidence that these approaches play an important part in health and healing—at times to a more significant degree than technological and pharmacological interventions.

Nurses are wonderfully prepared to provide the care, comfort, and compassion that promote the holistic high-quality health-care services that elders desire and deserve.

Gerontological Nursing offers both students and practitioners of gerontological nursing the knowledge that can enable them to provide competent holistic care to older adults in a variety of service settings and to demonstrate the beauty and uniqueness of the art of nursing elders.

Charlotte Eliopoulos

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By the time a book reaches its fourth edition, the persons who played a part in its development and refinement are too numerous to mention. Family and friends offer support and understanding when writing demands shift personal priorities. Colleagues offer time and honest feedback when direction and appraisal are needed. Older acquaintances offer reality when temptation rises to produce a literary creation for readers rather than a practical tool for caregivers. The list goes on. For their love, support, friendship, encouragement, and constructive criticism, I thank these special individuals.

Thanks also goes to the team of Lippincott. Editor Mary Gyetvan envisioned and promoted the improved format and appearance of the book in ways I would not have considered. Susan Keneally, Assistant Editor, diligently looked after the numerous details that transform a raw manuscript into a bound book. The Art Department's creativity provided an attractive, fresh graphic design that beautifully amplifies the text. And although they are seldom considered in a book's production, the Sales Department deserves thanks for providing invaluable feedback as to the preferences and suggestions of those who use the text.

As always, I owe a significant debt of gratitude to the many older adults who touched my life and taught me the beauty of age.

Charlotte Eliopoulos

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Overview of Gerontological Nursing



UNIT
I

Foundations of Gerontological Nursing

1

Chapter Outline

The aged through history

- Ancient Chinese respect for aged
- Early Egyptian interest in maintaining youth
- Biblical emphasis on respect for elders
- Legislative efforts to improve quality of life and services

Development of gerontological nursing

- Nursing's long history of caring for elderly
- Landmarks in development of gerontological nursing

Gerontological nursing roles

- Healer
- Implementor
- Educator
- Advocate
- Innovator

Standards

- Purpose of standards
- Various standards for gerontological nursing practice

Principles guiding gerontological nursing practice

- Aging is natural process
- Variety of factors influence aging
- Unique data and knowledge used
- Elderly possess same universal self-care demands as others
- Focus of gerontological nursing is to help elderly achieve personhood

Holistic gerontological care

- Utilization of knowledge and skills from various disciplines
- Consideration of physical, mental, social, and spiritual health
- Balance of mind, body, and spirit

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter you should be able to:

- describe the different ways in which the aged were viewed throughout history
- list landmarks that affected the development of gerontological nursing
- discuss major roles in gerontological nursing
- identify standards utilized in gerontological nursing practice
- list principles guiding gerontological nursing practice
- explain holistic gerontological nursing care

THE AGED THROUGH HISTORY

Today's elderly have offered the sacrifice, strength, and spirit that made this country great. They were the proud GIs in world wars, the brave immigrants who ventured into an unknown land, the bold entrepreneurs

who took risks that created wealth and opportunities for work, the unselfish parents who struggled to give their children a better life. They have witnessed and participated in the most profound informational, technological, and social growth and change. They have earned respect, admiration, and dignity. Today the elderly are viewed