Promoting Independence and Activity in Older People
Note

Health care practice and knowledge are constantly changing and developing as new research and treatments, changes in procedures, drugs and equipment become available.

The author and publishers have, as far as is possible, taken care to confirm that the information complies with the latest standards of practice and legislation.

This book acts as a guide to the range of available options. Treatments, products, equipment and organisations named within this book do not imply endorsement of a particular product; nor does omission indicate disapproval. Certain equipment and adaptations are zero rated for Value Added Tax (VAT).

Neither the author nor the publisher can accept legal responsibility for personal injury, or any other damage, or loss arising from the use of any equipment; or following any course of action stated herein including misuse of the information provided in this book. Such remedies must be sought from the manufacturers of the equipment, or the suppliers of any services concerned.
Promoting Independence and Activity in Older People

Julie I. Swann
## Contents

Preface ix

**Part 1**

**Transitions**

Chapter 1  The journey into care  3

Chapter 2  Ageing  13

**Part 2**

**Barriers**

Chapter 3  Removing barriers  21

Chapter 4  Making care homes more accessible  29

Chapter 5  Turning gardens into multi-sensory experiences  41

**Part 3**

**Different approaches**

Chapter 6  The importance of assessment  53

Chapter 7  Doing things differently  59

Chapter 8  Assistive devices  65
## Contents

**Part 4**  
**Supporting individuals with their personal care needs**  
  - Chapter 9  
    Personal hygiene 77  
  - Chapter 10  
    Washing bodies 89  
  - Chapter 11  
    Bathing 95  
  - Chapter 12  
    Showering 101

**Part 5**  
**Supporting individuals in dressing**  
  - Chapter 13  
    Keeping up appearances: helping residents to dress 109  
  - Chapter 14  
    When it's hard to dress: managing cognitive problems 117

**Part 6**  
**Helping individuals to eat and drink**  
  - Chapter 15  
    Food for thought: providing solutions to feeding problems 127

**Part 7**  
**Continence management**  
  - Chapter 16  
    Supporting individuals to go to the toilet 139  
  - Chapter 17  
    Urinary continence 145

**Part 8**  
**Recreational activities**  
  - Chapter 18  
    The value of recreational activities 153  
  - Chapter 19  
    Gardening: a pleasurable and beneficial activity 161
Chapter 20
Cognitive quietening: turning down the mind’s clock 169

Chapter 21
Pampering and basic skin care 177

Part 9
Keeping mobile
Chapter 22
Helping individuals keep mobile 187
Chapter 23
Mobility appliances 195
Chapter 24
Movement to music 201

Part 10
Major disabilities and ways of minimising problems
Chapter 25
Understanding and reducing the risk of a stroke 211
Chapter 26
Strokes – what can care staff do? 219
Chapter 27
The effect of a stroke on daily living tasks 227
Chapter 28
Parkinson’s disease 233
Chapter 29
Coping with the symptoms of Parkinson’s disease 239
Chapter 30
Understanding multiple sclerosis 247
Chapter 31
Living with multiple sclerosis 253

Part 11
Rehabilitation
Chapter 32
The rehabilitation team 265
Chapter 33
Neurological treatment techniques 271
Preface

This book is about helping older people achieve independence. The emphasis throughout is on personal care: finding the best way to help people maintain their level of independence and stay active for as long as possible.

Although it focuses on those who are mainly in residential care settings, the content is relevant to problems that can occur at any age and in any setting.

Carers will find this practical approach particularly useful in helping them in their important role of enabling people to become more independent and to manage tasks more easily.

The book is based upon articles written in the *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation* in 2006 and for the practical series in Residential and Nursing Care, published between 2004 and 2007.

This book can be read in its entirety or used as a reference source when problems arise. Each part is separate, but several major themes emerge.

Part 1 describes the changes that occur due to ageing. The effect of ageing on cognitive abilities and physical function is described and the impact of moving into a care home setting is explored.

Part 2 considers environmental barriers that can affect people with cognitive and physically problems and prevent their full participation in society.

Part 3 outlines the importance of continuous assessment. Different techniques that can be used to make tasks easier, and the use of assistive devices to overcome barriers are discussed.

Parts 4–7 concentrate on supporting individuals with personal care activities, including ways in which tasks can be simplified, or adaptations and assistive devices used. Topics include: personal hygiene, washing bodies, bathing, showering, dressing difficulties including cognitive problems, eating and drinking problems, toileting and urinary incontinence.

Part 8 concentrates on leisure and recreation. In addition to providing basic care, it is an integral part of a care home’s philosophy to provide a varied programme of optional activities for residents, and it is also part of the Care Home for Older People National Minimum Standards 12 to 15. Suggestions are provided for group and individual activities to include in programmes, ranging from gardening to pampering sessions.

Part 9 is about keeping mobile. Mobility problems and the correct use of mobility appliances are discussed, and movement to music is outlined.
Preface

Part 10 describes three of the major medical conditions: strokes, Parkinsonism and multiple sclerosis. These chapters explain how such conditions affect the body, and how carers can help to overcome problems of mobility and daily living.

Part 11 introduces the rehabilitation team and some specialised techniques that traditional and complementary therapists use and encourages carers to work with therapists, to facilitate and maintain movement patterns.

The final part of the book explores the Internet and computers, discussing the ways in which technology can shape the care sector and future of care homes.

Many chapters contain information for candidates who are taking, or have taken, S/NVQs in Care. Although this book is primarily intended for care staff and managers within a care home, other readers will find the content useful, in particular: students and practitioners within the caring professions; people who have difficulties with activities of daily living and mobility; housing associations; and providers of care in the community.

Julie I. Swann
Independent Occupational Therapist
April 2007
PART I

Transitions