

Promoting Independence and Activity in Older People

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Promoting Independence and Activity in Older People

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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 physical 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.

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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.

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April 2007

PART I

Transitions

