

B O O K S

**Palliative Care: A Patient-Centered Approach.** Geoffrey Mitchell. New York: Radcliffe Publishing, 2008, 168 pages, \$49.95.

✓ Softcover



*Palliative Care: A Patient-Centered Approach* is part of a series of topic-specific books written to illustrate the application of the patient-centered clinical approach—a method described in the overview book *Patient-Centered Medicine—Transforming the Clinical Method* (2003). This approach to patient care focuses on balancing caring and curing in providing care for patients in the 21st century. Written for clinicians by authors from Australia and England, the nine chapters follow a conceptual framework consisting of six components.

- Exploring both the disease and the illness experience
- Understanding the whole person
- Finding common ground
- Incorporating illness and health promotion
- Enhancing the clinician-patient relationship
- Being realistic

Although the book claims to be written for clinicians and educators in the medical, nursing, and allied health professions, the focus is primarily on the general practitioner. Palliative care includes care of all patients who face life-limiting illnesses. Following the first chapter that introduces the approach, subsequent chapters focus on various aspects of palliative care. One chapter explores ways to

address the palliative care needs of a society. An epidemiologic approach is used to illustrate how to address a community's need for palliative care, focusing on disenfranchised populations such as homeless, black, and other minority populations and older adults. Another chapter provides an overview of the dying process, from a physiologic view, emphasizing the process of multiple organ failure. These two chapters are followed by a chapter that addresses the disease approach and the patient's perspective of the illness experience using case studies for illustration. Another chapter focuses on the losses that occur with patients at the end of life and those close to them. The impact of those losses is described in terms of grieving, suffering, and mourning. Through a case study approach, the losses, recommendations, and care approaches are shown in adults and children who are dying and in the parents or caretakers of children. Another chapter focuses on the myriad of symptoms found in caring for patients with life-threatening diseases, and includes pain, nausea, dyspnea, and fatigue among others. Pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic approaches are described. In a chapter on communication and relationships, the role of the family practitioner as advocate, team leader, and navigator of a complex medical system is described and demonstrated in a case study. The final content chapter addresses health promotion and palliative care. Emphasized is the need to start palliative care early in the course of the disease and continuing throughout the disease trajectory.

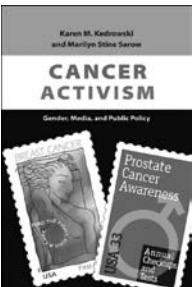
Although the book is extensive in scope, the content is essentially superficial. Larger and more definitive textbooks will be needed by the clinician learning about and practicing palliative care. In addition, the patient-centered approach, which apparently is new to medicine, has been an organizing concept in nursing education since the 1960s. Combining the pathophysiologic description of the dying process with the psychosocial

concerns of family, communication, and patient goals is the approach used in palliative care nursing textbooks. Nevertheless, this new book can serve as a primer for those involved in palliative care and may be of value in improving the quality of interdisciplinary palliative care.

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**Cancer Activism: Gender, Media, and Public Policy.** Karen M. Kedrowski and Marilyn Stine Sarow (Eds.). Chicago: University of Illinois, 2007, 288 pages, \$40.

✓ Hardcover



*Cancer Activism: Gender, Media, and Public Policy* chronicles two cancer advocacy movements: breast and prostate cancer. Comprised of three major sections, each chapter is filled with historic milestones, outlining the genesis and progression of both areas of cancer advocacy. The authors, Karen Kedrowski, professor and chair in the Department of Political Science, and Marilyn Stine Sarow, associate professor of Mass Communications, are social scientists and very ably use qualitative and quantitative approaches when describing the successes and challenges associated with each movement.

Consistent with the authors' goal, the book provides an excellent discussion on the influence of grass roots organizations, the media, and public policy in shaping and influencing both movements. The authors underscore that the breast cancer movement emerged as one of the strongest and most influential movements in cancer advocacy history, surpassing the prostate cancer movement and serving as a model for other movements to come. Breast and prostate cancer survivors are credited with spearheading the movements, resulting

Ease of Reference and Usability	Content Level	Media Size
Quick, on-the-spot resource	Basic	Pocket size
Moderate time requirement	Intermediate	Intermediate
In-depth study	Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required	Desk reference

in research funding and increased media attention. Advances in cancer advocacy such as the creation of the American Cancer Society's Reach to Recovery Program and the first Man-to-Man Prostate Cancer Support Group, to name a few, very much resulted from the work of cancer survivors or what the authors refer to as "grass roots survivors' organizations."

A major strength of the book is the detailed and engrossing accounts of breast and prostate cancer activism over a 20-year time period. In addition, the book includes several tables comparing the two movements in areas such as the amounts and types of research funding, types and frequencies of media coverage, and the demographic profiles of advocates involved with both movements. While highlighting the successes of the breast and prostate cancer movements, the authors are mindful to acknowledge the faces not represented in the public eye. Behind these absent faces are people who, too, experience disease and illness.

*Cancer Activism* is an excellent reference for cancer researchers and clinicians, cancer advocates, survivors, policy makers, and others involved in the cancer arena. This unique text serves as an excellent foundation for enhancing cancer awareness, creating and sustaining effective coalitions, facilitating proactive advocacy, enhancing medical communication, stimulating medical research and funding, and shaping public policy.

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## NEW RELEASES

**Cancer Care for the Whole Patient: Meeting Psychosocial Health Needs.** *Institute of Medicine.* Washington, DC: National Academies Press, October 2007, 456 pages, ISBN 100309111072.



patients live longer and experience better quality of life. In addition, *Cancer Care for the Whole Patient* suggests actions for a range of professionals involved in health care, from oncology providers to consumer advocates, on how to enact standards of psychosocial care. Participating groups in the report included the Committee on Psychosocial Services to Cancer Patients/Families in a Community Setting, Board on Health Care Services, and Institute of Medicine.

**Cancer Prevention Research Trends.** *Louis Braun and Maximilian Lange.* Nova Science Publishers, August 2008, ISBN 9781604566390.

The complex etiology of cancer is likely a result of genetic and environmental risk factors. Because cancer is so prolific, cancer prevention research is important in helping to identify key molecular and cellular biologic targets

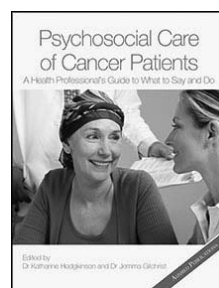
*Cancer Care for the Whole Patient*, a report requested by Congress and the National Institutes of Health, addresses the psychosocial needs of patients with cancer. The book provides recommendations, guidance, and tools to ensure that

for cancer prevention. *Cancer Prevention Research Trends* provides an overview of research performed around the world on the complex subject of cancer and how to prevent it.

**Cognition and Cancer.** *Christina A. Meyers and James R. Perry.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, November 2008, ISBN 9780521854825.

*Cognition and Cancer* is a resource for healthcare professionals working with patients with cancer who experience cognitive changes as a result of cancer and its treatment. The book details changes in mental function suffered by patients with cancer and provides practical information to help improve care by explaining how to identify, assess, and treat conditions associated with cognitive change.

**Psychosocial Care of Cancer Patients: A Health Professional's Guide for What to Say and Do.** *Katharine Hodgkinson and Jemma Gilchrist.* Victoria, Australia: Ausmed Publications, August 2008, ISBN 9780977515394.



*Psychosocial Care of Cancer Patients: A Health Professional's Guide for What to Say and Do* aims to support and guide healthcare professionals to provide quality psychosocial care to all patients. The book offers practical strategies for assessing and managing common concerns, helps identify and develop skills for healthcare professionals, provides case studies with learning objectives, and contains resource sheets.

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