

**Working With Families in Medical Settings:
A Multidisciplinary Guide for Psychiatrists
and Other Health Professionals**

edited by Alison M. Heru, MD. Routledge, New York, NY, 2013,
249 pages, \$140.00 (hardback), \$54.95 (paper).

Working With Families in Medical Settings is a gem of a book. It is the rare guide that has useful and practical suggestions that are truly helpful to the psychiatrist, other physicians, nurses, and social workers who work on an inpatient medical unit. Ultimately, it is patients and their caregivers who are the beneficiaries.

The book is organized into 3 parts, Family Theory and Research, Involvement of the Family in the Health Care System, and Family Systems Assessment and Intervention. The editor provides an overview of each of the parts at the beginning of the book. At the start of a new part, each chapter is described. At the top of the first page to each chapter, bullet points delineate the critical points per chapter. Hence, the book is easy to navigate.

Even though each chapter is written by a different author, the writing is clear throughout. Ideally, one will want to read the book from beginning to end, but specific chapters can be picked out and read in their entirety.

The editor's goal in publishing the book, to help clinicians provide optimum care to patients and families, is relevant to this current time in health care. One of her goals, which she meets admirably, is to show how to structure interventions in different settings. In the chapter "Behavioral Interventions for Disruptive Family Situations in the General Medical Setting," the author addresses the use of a behavior care plan. She describes in detail 4 problematic cases and the development of specific care plans for

each case. From these case examples, the reader has a framework for providing good patient care while addressing difficult family situations.

The chapter titled "The Caregiver's Perspective" is equally informative. Caregiving for children, adolescents, spouses, the elderly, and patients with terminal illness is discussed. The author also provides clinical practice guidelines for conducting family meetings in palliative care. Again, readers will find helpful the many practical strategies offered in this chapter.

This guide provides an invaluable resource for practitioners in the medical setting. The appendix contains rating scales for caregiver experience and coping with illness and a Global Assessment of Relational Functioning. The appendix also has a selection of books and articles relating to parenting with life-threatening illness. Additionally, each chapter has its own references, which are comprehensive and up to date.

In summary, *Working With Families in Medical Settings: A Multidisciplinary Guide for Psychiatrists and Other Health Professionals* should be on the shelf of educators, psychiatrists, and health care providers in the medical setting. Particularly in this time of complicated decision-making, understanding and implementing tools from the book will make the tasks easier and better for the patient and family.

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