Care of Older Adults: A strengths-based approach is a comprehensive introduction to aged care for the nursing profession in clinical practice. By taking a strengths-based approach, the book encourages practice with a focus on individuals’ potential and capacities rather than their limits. Theories of ageing are linked with the older individual’s strengths to ensure the text is well framed from an evidence base, as well as a clinical orientation.

Divided into three parts, the book presents the topic from a healthy ageing perspective through to chronic illness, frailty and end of life. Each chapter includes discussion and reflective questions, and concludes with a list of key points summarising the central content. Case studies combine evidence-based knowledge with practical examples in a number of aged-care settings.

Written by internationally renowned authors with extensive practical experience in aged care, Care of Older Adults provides undergraduate students in Australia and New Zealand with local content and a nursing focus.
Care of Older Adults
A strengths-based approach
Wendy Moyle, Deborah Parker, Marguerite Bramble
Foreword

One of life’s truisms is that we will all experience ageing. Most of us won’t think about it until the effects of ageing give us either a gentle nudge or a hard wake-up call. Either way, when we are confronted with its effects, quite reasonably we won’t want it to define us. Rather the effects and changes of ageing will be woven into the fabric of what makes us unique as individuals.

Unfortunately in the western world the term ‘ageing’ has evolved to have negative connotations in a way that devalues the worth of the individual’s contributions – past, present and future. Yet we know that the older person can be resilient, informed about their health issues and actively engaged in the decisions about their health and care requirements. As a health professional, adopting a strengths-based perspective means we can support the person and their family, acknowledging their strengths and resources rather than focusing on problems, vulnerabilities and potential deficits.

Therefore a strengths-based approach provides a context for practice and care that is positive, inclusive and empowering because it encourages the older adult to take control of their own life in meaningful and sustainable ways. Notably a strengths-based approach doesn’t deny that a person experiences problems but rather takes account of these while attempting to identify the positive basis of the person’s resources and strengths that will inform how they deal with the challenges resulting from the problems. A strengths-based approach to care offers a different language to describe the older adult’s situation and enables health professionals to see opportunities and solutions, not merely problems. Identifying, acknowledging and working with strengths as a starting point for care is not the norm in health care services despite the obvious benefits of doing so.

The authors, Wendy Moyle, Deborah Parker and Marguerite Bramble, have given us a text that is informative, logically sequenced and easy to use as a reference to inform practice while challenging our current models of care delivery for older adults. They do this by embedding in each chapter principles that are not merely theoretical but that challenge us to also consider our values and attitudes, which we know shape the way we care for others. This text provides us with the knowledge we need to ensure our practice is about working in partnership with the older person and facilitating rather than always fixing, focusing on health/well-being within the context of their current health status rather than being constantly concerned with and belabouring deficits.
FOREWORD

I congratulate the authors on their collaborative efforts to bring this excellent piece of work to fruition and believe this text can assist all health professionals providing care to the older person from the novice undergraduate, as they learn their profession, to the most advanced practitioner.

Professor Helen McCutcheon
Dean, Florence Nightingale School of Nursing and Midwifery
King’s College, London
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About the authors

Wendy Moyle
PhD, MHSc, BN, Dip App Sci, RN
Wendy is the Director of the Centre for Health Practice Innovation (HPI), a research program in the Griffith Health Institute at Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland. She is also a research leader in a National Dementia Collaborative Research Centre – Consumers and Carers and the Dementia Training and Study Centre at QUT. Her research focus has been on finding evidence for managing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia using controlled trials to test psychosocial interventions, assistive technologies, social robots, and complementary and alternative medicine interventions.

Deborah Parker
PhD, MSocSc, BA, Grad Cert Gerontology, Grad Cert Executive Leadership, RN
Deborah is the Director of the University of Queensland/Blue Care Research and Practice Development Centre and the Australian Centre for Evidence Based Community Care based at the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland. Her research focus is on palliative aged care, dementia and evaluation of health services for older people.

Marguerite Bramble
PhD, BN (Hons), BEc, Grad Cert Research Mgmt, Grad Cert Strat Marketing, RN
Marguerite is a nurse academic with a passion for improving clinical practice, education and research in aged care. Currently Marguerite is Project Manager for a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funded project in the Centre for Health Practice Innovation (HPI), a research program in the Griffith Health Institute at Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland. She is also an adjunct senior lecturer with the University of Tasmania, where her teaching and supervisory focus is aged care and dementia care. Marguerite’s research has involved a partnership intervention for family caregivers of people with dementia.
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