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An Introduction to Community and Primary Health Care

Community nursing is the fastest-growing area of nursing practice in Australia. In today's diverse society, health professionals require the skills and knowledge to meet the complex needs of a wide range of communities and individuals. This book offers an engaging introduction to the theory, skills and application of community and primary health care in Australia.

Based on the social model of health, *An Introduction to Community and Primary Health Care* explores how social and environmental factors affect health care in Australian communities. It explains how health is embedded within social policy frameworks, and advocates community participation in a collaborative health care process. It discusses the principles of health and mental health promotion, the importance of cultural competence and the practice of community needs assessment.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I explains the key theories behind primary and community health care, while Part II identifies the skills needed in health care practice. Part III examines specific health professional roles in areas such as Indigenous nursing, men's and women's health, rural nursing and youth health. Drawing on the diverse expertise of the contributing authors, this section is unique to this book in that it encourages students to consider how various nursing roles address issues of social justice, equality and access. Case studies illustrate each role in practice.

Each chapter includes learning objectives, reflective questions, critical thinking activities and further reading to consolidate learning. Comprehensive online resources are available at www.cambridge.edu.au/academic/communityhealth. Instructor resources include multiple-choice questions and videos. Student resources include weblinks and an interactive glossary.

Readable and highly practical, *An Introduction to Community and Primary Health Care* equips students with the theory, skills and understanding they will need as community and primary health care professionals working across Australia.

Diana Guzys is Lecturer in the Faculty of Health Sciences at La Trobe University.

Eileen Petrie is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Health at the University of Canberra.

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Contributors

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Wayne Rigby (RN, certificates in psychiatry, general retardation and community health, Bachelor of Social Welfare, Masters of Health Science) is an Aboriginal man of Bundjalung

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Andrea Scott (Bachelor of Public Health) works as a school nurse in both primary and secondary schools for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and has been delivering primary health care and health promotion for the past 12 years. Prior to that she worked as a nurse in the Child and Adolescent Unit at Bendigo Health in Victoria for 12 years.

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Preface

This book aims to provide an easy-to-read foundation for any health care professional engaged in primary health care practice in the community.

The first part introduces the key concepts that underpin nursing practice. The objective is to provide a basic understanding of these concepts to enable students to explore the associated theory in depth; to provide a fundamental understanding that is so often assumed, rather than built.

The second part of the text provides information relating to skills used in community and primary health care practice. This information is discussed at a beginning practitioner level, with a view to being a launching pad for future practice.

The final part of the text uses a number of community nursing roles to enable students to explore the numerous opportunities and diverse ways in which the concepts discussed in Parts I and II are implemented in daily practice. Although this section focuses on nursing practice, many of these roles occur within interdisciplinary teams, and therefore it provides similar insights for students from other health care disciplines. While a wide selection of roles are presented, it is important to keep in mind that these are not necessarily representative of roles with similar titles across and within the states and territories. This purpose of this section of the text is not meant as career counselling, but rather to demonstrate the links between theory and practice. One of the most exciting aspects of practice in community settings is that it offers many unique and eclectic practice possibilities, to meet the diverse needs of each community.

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Diana Guzys:

I would like to thank all of those who contributed to this text, for their generosity of time and spirit, particularly my colleague Eileen Petrie. This work is dedicated to my parents, Stan and Shirley Guzys, who taught me to value knowledge and to love books.

Eileen Petrie:

I would like to thank all of those who contributed to this text, for their generosity of time and spirit, particularly my colleague Diana Guzys, who is inspirational in her dedication to writing and life. Thank you, Diana, for being there for me throughout my very difficult 2012. This work is dedicated to my dear friends and to my brother-in-law, who will remain forever young.

We would also like to acknowledge Dr Brian Phillips from Charles Darwin University for his insights and contribution to the section on social connectedness, recovery and mental health in Chapter 14.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to Dr Renée Otmar for her insights, comments, suggestions and efforts in helping us to create a cohesive and useful text.

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