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Providing Compassionate Healthcare: Challenges In Policy And Practice



Synopsis

Despite the scope and sophistication of contemporary health care, there is increasing international concern about the perceived lack of compassion in its delivery. Citing evidence that when the basic needs of patients are attended to with kindness and understanding, recovery often takes place at a faster level, patients cope more effectively with the self-management of chronic disorders and can more easily overcome anxiety associated with various disorders, this book looks at how good care can be put back into the process of caring. Beginning with an introduction to the historical values associated with the concept of compassion, the text goes on to provide a bio-psycho-social theoretical framework within which the concept might be further explained. The third part presents thought-provoking case studies and explores the implementation and impact of compassion in a range of healthcare settings. The fourth part investigates the role that organizations and their structures can play in promoting or hindering the provision of compassion. The book concludes by discussing how compassion may be taught and evaluated, and suggesting ways for increasing the attention paid to compassion in health care. Developing a multi-disciplinary theory of compassionate care, and underpinned by empirical examples of good practice, this volume is a valuable resource for all those interesting in understanding and supporting compassion in health care, including advanced students, academics and practitioners within medicine, nursing, psychology, allied health, sociology and philosophy.

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Customer Reviews

'This book was inspired by the apparent need to restore humanity to healthcare and the contributing authors cover areas such as the concept of compassion, therapeutic approaches to compassion and the implementation and impact of compassion in healthcare. Each section deals clearly with the issues and most are illustrated with examples from practice or the authors' own experiences. These examples show it is the small touches of humanity during a healthcare episode that can improve the experience of patients, carers and families. However, the authors don't shy away from examining the failings in a number of healthcare systems around the world and indeed it is one of the book's strengths that it includes examples from several countries with differing approaches to funding healthcare. The section that resonated most with me was on organisational issues. Most healthcare professionals are compassionate individuals and it was helpful to read about the risk factors that can lead to compassion fatigue...The book was easy to read and thought provoking and guiding the reader into examining their day-to-day practice and the organisational culture in which they practise.'

Janet Thomas, Frontline Magazine, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

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