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## ***Book reviews***

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**Chronic Illness: Impact and Interventions.** 2d ed. by Ilene Morof Lubkin. 1990. Jones and Bartlett Publishers. 20 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116. 457 pages. \$32.00.

Everyone associated with the field of home health care is aware of the impact of chronic illness on health care resources as well as on the economic structure of this country. Although we are aware of the influence of chronic illness, the definition of chronic illness is varied. Chronic illness is not simply the reverse or extension of acute illness but rather a unique state that impacts on the social, psychological, ethical, and financial aspects of the individual, their family and the community. Lubkin equates chronic illness to a "guest" who comes to stay and becomes a part of the family. Although this guest is a welcomed alternative to death, the guest provides a mixed blessing to the host family and society.

"Chronic Illness: Impact and Interventions" is a comprehensive presentation of the scope, impact, and importance of chronic illness. The author has selected works from nurses around the country to

*J Home Health Care Prac* 1991;4(1):78-79  
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present an in-depth analysis of issues related to chronic illness. Case studies are used to illustrate many of the important points.

The explosive increase in the prevalence of chronic illness is directly related to the advances in health care technology. Life saving and life sustaining inventions continue to fuel the growth of chronic illness. Almost half of the population over 65 years and a quarter of it between the ages of 45 and 65 years have at least one chronic illness. Chronic illness can develop from multiple causes, can develop in multiple ways, and can lead to a wide variety of outcomes.

The book is divided into four major parts: The Impact of Disease; Impact on Client and Family; Impact on the Health Professional; and Impact of the System. Chapter 1 in part 1 presents an excellent summary of chronicity and defines the meaning and impact of chronic illness. Five additional chapters in this section deal with specific issues such as illness behavior, altered mobility, chronic pain and stigma. The chapter on stigma is excellent and brings together content on both the impact of stigma and on interventions for dealing with stigmatized individuals. The chapters in this first part could be used as a resource manual, as they are complete and give interventions as well as substantial content on the subject.

Part 2, Impact on the Client and Family, presents chapters related to quality of life, coping with fear and grieving, body image, sexuality, and family caregiving. The chapter on sexuality is especially appropriate as this is a section often overlooked in discussions of chronic illness. The chapter on family caregiving discusses the advantages of home care along with the cost of caregiving to the family. The chapter is well

written and covers the essential components but does not present new content for the specialist in home health care.

Part three applies specific theoretical content, such as teaching and change, to chronic illness. The content is interesting; however, the application is limited. The chapter on research does attempt to identify the problems of conducting research in the area of chronicity; however, the issue regarding practicing nurses not being prepared to conduct research studies is not specific to chronic illness.

The final part of the book deals with the impact of the health care system on chronic illness. One chapter discusses the needs of the chronically ill client and community resources in relationship to fragmentation, cost of care, lack of communication, and politics and power. The chapter discussing the financial impact of chronic illness brings the financial issues facing health care into sharp focus. Several suggestions are presented to address the problem, such as health maintenance organizations (HMOs), expanding nursing roles, and a national health insurance system.

This book is a major contribution to helping professionals understand chronic illness and how it affects the individuals, family, and society. Many of the chapters could be used for reference; however, the strength of the book is that it provides a comprehensive in-depth presentation of chronic illness. For the professional nurse in home health care, this book provides a summary of the factors that have shaped and will continue to shape the practice. Home health care will be called on to provide an ever increasing array of services for the individuals and families living with a chronic illness.