

## BOOK REVIEWS\*

### **Guidelines for Planning and Evaluating Epilepsy Education Programs**

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The Epilepsy Foundation of America,  
Landover, Maryland, 1982

*Guidelines* provides a step-by-step method for implementing an epilepsy education program, from needs assessment through promotion and evaluation. Since the project is funded by the Epilepsy Foundation of America, I felt the need to stress the usefulness of epilepsy education, as did the authors. The usefulness of *Guidelines* goes beyond this patient population, however, and may be applied to any patient-education program.

The authors define program, as it is used in the book, as "a planned *interactive activity* designed to meet an *educational need*." *Guidelines* is useful for the individual program as opposed to the hospitalwide organizational effort. The authors also state that *Guidelines* was not written for developing media in any format or for individualized instruction modules. Written in a workbook format, *Guidelines* encourages readers to develop their own programs as they read through the planning phases. They do provide a sample program development that the reader may follow through the workbook. Permission is given to duplicate and use the complete set of blank worksheets provided in *Guidelines*.

The book leads the reader through five phases, each of which is broken down into five to ten steps, a total of 36 steps in all. This may seem a great deal for one program, but the authors freely admit that all may not apply to or be needed for every situation. They encourage the readers to "be flexible and adapt the steps of the planning process . . ."

Phase 1 is "Assessing the Need and the Resources." This moves the reader through identifying the problem and the clients/target group. Resources are also looked at and evaluated so as not to reinvent the wheel. The authors ask the reader to take a hard look at some realities, namely, is there time available for the pro-

gram; does it fit one's job description; does it meet an organizational need?

Phase 2 is "Developing the Program." This takes the reader through the various steps, including three that are essential to any educational effort. Step 4, "the most important step of the entire program development process," has the reader perform a needs assessment with the target group to find out what is needed from *their* perspective. Step 5 is the writing of objectives, and a fine explanation is given in differentiating between program objectives and learner objectives. Step 6 addresses formulation of an evaluation plan in the beginning, a step that all too often is thought of after the program is in progress.

One of the few areas where I disagree with the authors is in the area of program coordinator skills, which should be identified and defined.

Phase 3 is titled "Organizing for Impact." This phase contains the details for making a program run smoothly, ie, time, site, budget, publicity, pretest evaluation forms, and recordkeeping. Most of these activities are assumed in other program plans, but there is a definite advantage in having them laid out.

Phase 4 covers "Implementing the Program." All of the activities of the previous three phases go into action at this point. Again with this phase, details of implementing are provided. This concludes with the program presented as planned.

Phase 5 is "Evaluating the Program." Evaluation starts with developing the evaluation plan in phase 2. The evaluation forms are prepared and pretested in phase 3. Actual evaluation data are collected for pretest of client knowledge in phase 4. By the time the reader reaches phase 5, he or she knows what to assess and with what instrument(s).

In the beginning section of *Guidelines* the authors state that the book is useful for either lay or professional people. While it is written in straightforward language with a refreshing lack of jargon, I believe that individuals venturing into program development for the first time might have some difficulties, at least the first time through. The book is thorough and does provide step-by-step guidelines, which I believe even the seasoned professional can use in part or whole to plan and evaluate epilepsy education programs as well as any other patient-education program.

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\*In this issue, all of the book reviews have been prepared by members of the Special Patient Education Book Review Committee composed of members of the Michigan Society for Health Care Manpower Education and Training and the Great Lakes Chapter, Society for Public Health Education.