Do They Make a Difference? Consumer Health Information Services

by Nancy Calabretta
Reuben L. Sharp Health Sciences Library Cooper Health System

The CAPHIS sponsored session held at the annual Medical Library Association Meeting was moderated by Joanne Marshall. An interesting, value-added feature was the response to the presentations by Linda Baker, Assistant Professor, Wayne State University. Linda received the papers ahead of time and was able to provide suggestions for improving research methodology specific to each project. She also addressed the issue of where to go from here with consumer health research, stressing the mutual benefit of collaboration between library school faculty and librarians.

The first presenter was Cheryl Warren, Medical Librarian at Valley Care Health System in California; her paper was entitled "Serving the Young and the Restless: Development of a Youth Health Collection in a Consumer Health Library." Cheryl developed a teen-focused collection after noticing a rise in the number of questions related to both youth health problems and youth risk behaviors. Involved in the planning process were kids and their parents, health professionals, teachers from local schools, representatives from community organizations and library staff. Funding was obtained from outside the health system. Resources purchased included models, laminated posters and popular, Nintendo-style games on youth health conditions. All of the materials circulate. Internet access was also provided along with a set of bookmarks that have since been customized by enthusiastic users. Marketing efforts

(Continued on page 4)
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Consumer Health and Patient Information Listserv

Sponsored by CAPHIS!

The CAPHIS Listserv is an unmoderated discussion list created for people interested in consumer and patient information. If you would like to subscribe, send a message to:

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Welcome to the Indian Summer issue of Consumer Connections. Your comments are welcome.
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Winter issue Nov 15, 1998
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Summer issue Jul. 15, 1999

How to submit articles to the Newsletter:
Send your articles about patient and consumer health programs and successes, interesting experiences, news items, book reviews, exciting tidbits of information, etc., to me:
Kay Deeney, Editor
See page 2 for address details.

I prefer receiving materials emailed to me or sent on IBM compatible floppy diskettes. With floppies—ASCII, WordPerfect and Word for Windows formats are acceptable. Otherwise, please contact me. Help make this an interesting, relevant and useful newsletter! Participate!

Kay Deeney
Editor

The National Consumer Health Library Directory is at:
http://www.njc.org/CAPHIS/Directory/
Do They Make a Difference?

(Continued from page 1)

centered around newspaper articles and open houses. A questionnaire to evaluate the service has been administered in the one health class that is required to use the library. Cheryl noted that the project has been rewarding, although labor intensive, and that the community partnering experience was great.

Martha Earl, University of Tennessee Medical Center at Knoxville, spoke next on "Making a Difference: Determining the Impact of a Consumer Health Information Service on Participants' Attitudes, Health Care Decision Making, and Physician-Patient Communication." Another example of community partnering, this project featured the Medical Center Library working with the Knox County Public Library to answer consumer health questions. Approximately 12-20 queries are received each week. Packets of information ranging from 2-20 pages are mailed in response; each packet contains an evaluation form. They used the survey from Alan Rees' book, mailing 216 surveys and receiving about a 50% response rate. Not surprisingly, women were represented by a 4 to 1 ratio. Public library referrals and word of mouth accounted for 50% of the queries while 15% came from doctors and nurses. [There was an 87% satisfaction rate; generally the service was seen as an aid to communication with health professionals and a stress-reducer.] For half of the questioners, this interaction was their first contact with the Medical Center.

Bob Sekerak, Dana Medical Library at the University of Vermont, presented "VT CHIP: Health Care Information Consumers Define Need." The web page for this project is at: sageunix.uvm.edu/dana/vtchip

Again, this project involved working with public libraries. A poll of public librarians revealed that one-fourth of the queries received were health related and those queries often went unanswered. In response, most likely to respond. Privacy was a major concern. Traditional print resources were preferred by this group although younger, more educated respondents preferred electronic resources and showed a greater desire to go beyond their health care provider for information. Top areas of interest were specific diseases, drug information, wellness and diet.

One of the papers was not presented because the person was sick.

I think one of the best parts about the session was the responses by Linda Baker to each paper.

Dana staff developed an outreach web with 9 spokes, including public, academic, hospital, consumer and corporate libraries, consumer organizations, community health affiliates, the Vermont Department of Health, the AHEC, hospital patient education centers and the UVM community. A Likert-type scale was developed and distributed to discern consumer preferences for content and format of health materials. Only about a 28% response rate was achieved. Women aged 41-60 living in urban areas were the
The Librarian’s Role in Providing Consumer Health Information

By Gail Hendler
New York Academy of Medicine

The Consumer and Patient Health Information and Medical Library Education Sections jointly hosted the May 26, 1998 afternoon program session. Moderated by Naomi C. Broering, the speakers presented informative and inspiring discussions of “The Librarians’ Role in Providing Consumer Health Information.” Ms. Broering emphasized consumer health as the number one information need in the country. Executive Director of the Houston Academy of Medicine, Texas Medical Center Library, Ms. Broering spoke about academic libraries’ efforts in extending public services and supporting public libraries through training.

The five speakers affirmed the unique role medical librarians play in providing a consumer health information service. Representing academic, hospital, and special medical libraries, each lecturer discussed different types and levels of service. However, all stressed the high level of personal interaction involved in consumer health transactions, and the enormous (and immediate) personal rewards inherent in the consumer health information specialty.

Michelynn McKnight, Director of the Health Sciences Library, Norman Regional Hospital, outlined her five-step plan on implementing a consumer health hospital library service. Kathleen Moeller, Director, Health Sciences Library, Overlook Hospital, explained the professional benefits and enhancements that a consumer health service brings to the hospital library. Valerie Lawrence, formerly with the Planetree Health Library in Burien, Washington, related the history, philosophy and the environment of healing of the Planetree system. Elaine Russo Martin of the University of Illinois-Chicago, spoke about consumer health information on the Web, and provided a set of evaluation tips. The program concluded with Dr. Robin Overmeier’s moving, first-person account of the medical librarian as patient; she discussed her experiences and information needs as a patient newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.
CAPHIS Update

Bylaws Update
by David Duggar
CAPHIS Bylaws Committee
Chair

Well, it looks like we are in Year Three of trying to get the description of the Newsletter Committee as a Standing Committee passed as an amendment to the Section's bylaws. In 1996-97 the amendment was not published in time for the Section's meeting at MLA. In 1997-98 the amendment was published at least 30 days prior to the meeting, but it does not appear that it was brought up and voted on at the Section's meeting. They do say that "the third time's the charm."

At this point I do not know of any changes by MLA that will effect our bylaws, though MLA is looking at possible changes in the next few years regarding Section Council Alternates and their Model Bylaws.

For now, just make a mental note that at the 1998-99 Section meeting we will be presenting for vote the description of the Newsletter Committee as a Standing Committee for the Bylaws (Article VII. Committees, Section 1. Standing Committees, F. The Newsletter Committee ...).

CHI Brandon Hill Type Book List

Due to the power of email and the Web, I have updated Gail Hendler's list,

**Consumer Health Bibliography for the Small Public Library at:**
http://www.njc.org/caphis/ConsHealthBib.html

This now includes a reference to the *Core Bibliography of Consumer Health Reference Books* (October 1997) from the Lyman Maynard Stowe Library at the University of Connecticut Health Center, Farmington, Connecticut at:
http://www3.uchc.edu/~uchclib/departm/hnet/corelist.html

Check it out.

by Roz Dudden
CAPHIS Web Coordinator

1999 MLA Program Plans

**CAPHIS**, along with the Hospital Librarians Section and the Cancer Librarians Section, is sponsoring an invited speaker, Belleruth Naparstek during the 1999 MLA Annual Meeting in Chicago. Ms. Naparstek, MA, LISW, BCD, is a clinical social worker and psychotherapist, who has been a practicing clinician for 33 years. She is the author of *Staying Well with Guided Imagery* and *Your Sixth Sense: Unlocking the Power of Your Intuition*.

Ms. Naparstek will share her insights and discoveries on the use of guided imagery for healing and wellness in both the traditional and nontraditional health setting. Ms. Naparstek has an email newsletter and a Web site located at http://www.healthjourneys.com

Look for more information in the next issue of *Consumer Connections*.

Submitted by Cheryl Warren
Valley Care Health System
Pleasanton CA
MLA Directory Information

Published annually by the Medical Library Association (MLA), the Directory provides quick and easy access to expert health science librarians in the health information profession, covering topics such as consumer health and patient information, medical informatics, and cancer research. On page S2 of the 1997/98 Directory the CAPHIS Section members are listed. Although limited by being a snapshot in time, the list of CAPHIS members is useful for checking to see if some of your colleagues are members of our Section.

by Kay Deeney

Section Council

Janet Coggan, Section Council Representative, resigned from her position in August. She also resigned as Assistant University Librarian at the Health Science Center Library at the University of Florida. We will miss her.

by Kay Deeney

Articles from the Literature

| Clarke, HF. 280(8):698. |
| Rippen, HE; Guard, R; Kragen, M; Byrns, P; Silber, D; Buckovich, S. 280(8):699. |

Enormously popular in its previous editions, this title does not disappoint in its 5th edition. Alan Rees' stated purpose continues to be to "provide a comprehensive guide to popular health information (both print and electronic) of value to the general public," and this source succeeds admirably in that aim. Librarians looking for assistance in collection development and reference will find reviews of over 600 books, 130 magazines and newsletters, and 139 Web sites, as well as 45 online services and CDROMs. Also included are descriptions of 44 clearinghouses and information centers, 200 toll-free hotlines, 278 resource/referral organizations, and listings of 1400 pamphlet titles. Finally, Rees includes a bibliography of 48 medical texts, monographs and journals that he describes as the "supportive professional literature" of most value in a consumer health collection.

Chapter 1, "Medical Consumerism in the Age of Managed Care," provides a thoughtful overview of the expanding demand for consumer health information, the resources that are evolving to meet the demand, and the responses of government and the health care professions. CAPHIS and MLA are prominently featured in the section on library involvement, along with Susan Murray's Developing a Consumer Health Information Service: A Practical Guide and the Librarians Index to the Internet (http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/InternetIndex). Librarians will be pleased with the updated list in Chapter 2 of the "Best Sources of Consumer Health Information," often recommended on MEDLIB-L and the CAPHIS listservs as a "Brandon-Hill type list" for consumer health. As a result of the current high demand for electronic sources, readers will be interested in seeing which consumer health Web sites, received enough positive attention to make its absence puzzling. Also, regarding print resources, although Rees states in Chapter 1, "with few exceptions, retaining books on most medical topics published earlier than five years ago is not helpful to readers..." 6 of the 32 recommended titles in Chapter 2 were published in 1994, dangerously close to the 5-year cut-off point. All in all, each chapter contains enough information in the listings and their annotations to justify the purchase price of this resource.

Interesting tidbits of information are scattered throughout. One example in the section on search services for medical consumers refers to an article in Family Circle (April 24, 1995) describing seven search services as well as an evaluation of eight services by Health Facts (July 1994), which concluded that people were likely to be confused by the "extraneous information and the lack of guidance regarding which studies have more import than others." Also interesting is the overview of consumer health magazines and newsletters that prefaces the annotated listing of those resources in Chapter 4. Overall, the Consumer Health Information Source Book's 5th edition lives up to readers' expectations by providing an updated resource for librarians struggling to meet the demands of a burgeoning consumer population. Although his omission of HealthWeb is disappointing at best, Rees again demonstrates his expertise in all aspects of consumer health.

Reviewed by Nancy Calabretta
Reuben L. Sharp Health Sciences Library
Camden NJ

This is one of the latest volumes on children's health to be published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. This prestigious organization previously authored the titles Caring for Your School Age Child: Ages 5-12, Caring for Your Adolescent: Ages 12-15 (out of print), and Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5 (newly revised edition published July 1998). Each of these volumes provides parents and caregivers with highly reliable advice and information. Guide to Your Child's Symptoms is another excellent addition to the series.

Part One begins with an introduction and explanation of how to best use the book. It then continues on into an encyclopedic section which alphabetically lists and discusses common symptoms. Chapter One deals with newborn infants. With eight entries covering the most common problems experienced by newborns, each section is clearly indexed on the top of each page for easy reference. Chapter Two deals with ages ranging from babies to younger school age children. 72 entries cover a wide variety of physical and psychological symptoms. Each entry is 1-2 pages long; concise and informative with tables, charts, and line illustrations. Each entry also includes a "Consult your pediatrician if..." section to notify parents of serious problems. Chapter Three proceeds to adolescence, and covers 12 of the most common physical and psychological ailments faced by teens.

Part Two makes up the last third of the book, and covers first aid, safety, and a resource list. Chapter Four covers the basics of first aid; from choking to burns to animal bites. Line drawings and check lists accentuate the text. Chapter Five discusses safety and prevention. From child proofing the home to finding reliable child care, this chapter is complete. Chapter Six concerns food safety, including food-borne illness, food preparation, and food additives. The resource list contains a brief description of materials available free from the American Academy of Pediatrics. A comprehensive index ends the book.

Overall, this is a comprehensive text which is also user-friendly and inviting. It will complement any consumer health collection which has an emphasis on parenting materials.

Reviewed by Emily Saderholm
Health Dimensions
Lexington KY


Certified nurse midwife Pam England, and her co-author, psychologist Rob Horowitz, have produced an intriguing and comprehensive work on choices in childbirth. Based upon their Birthing from Within childbirth preparation program, this book outlines the program's basic tenets, and describes how it was developed through England's years of work as a midwife. Even those who don't participate in her program can benefit from this book, however.

Sections One and Two ask the expectant mother to explore her feelings during the months leading up to labor and delivery. Has she developed a support network of friends, family, and health professionals to help her during labor? How does she handle her fears of unbearable pain and botched delivery? Has she prepared herself physically for labor? England invites the expectant mother to use art, journaling, and imagery, among other therapies, to prepare physically and emotionally.

(Continued on page 10)
BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from page 9)

Sections Three and Four deal with the time close to delivery. A chapter entitled “Birthing with Wolves” describes the birthing mother’s natural protectiveness of her newborn, while it emphasizes the benefits of home birth. Although such chapters may seem non-traditional, they provide support for the expectant mother who wants to be aware of all her options. England offers detailed medical descriptions of which births are safe for the home and which should always take advantage of modern medical facilities. She believes that working with qualified midwives will always assist the mother in making the right decision for both her and her baby.

Fathers are offered helpful advice in Section Five. Topics include how to seek advice and support from other fathers who have already been through a birth and what to expect during and after the actual delivery. Factual yet reassuring, this section makes the willing father an active participant during labor and delivery.

Options for pain management are discussed in Section Six. Although the author advocates drug-free births whenever possible, she also details what anesthesia options exist, and which types are most effective for certain situations. Natural methods of pain management are discussed in detail, including massage, aromatherapy, and non-focused attention.

Finally, in Section Seven, England helps the new parent deal with the wonder and responsibility of parenthood. Maintaining a strong marriage when dealing with new roles as parents, recovering physically from labor, and various ways of preserving birth memories all help the new parents survive labor, and cherish their new family. Overall, this is an excellent book for centers supporting childbirth education programs, or for those with large pregnancy collections. This unique and supportive childbirth preparation program is backed up by reliable medical information, and the authors’ years of professional experience.

Reviewed by Emily Saderholm
Health Dimensions
Lexington KY

to “help you when the doctor is not immediately available, and to educate you to ask the right questions.”

Dr. Weinberg is a practicing pediatrician and the host of a weekly call-in TV program.

This 193 page book is full of short, easy-to-read chapters about every aspect of baby and child care. In fact, despite the book title, Dr. Weinberg also covers child care through puberty. The black and white line drawings that are scattered throughout the text are meant as separators between topics and don’t necessarily reflect what is being discussed. After each section Dr. Weinberg has included a Best Advice section; a bold typeface one or two sentence summary of the information just covered. These little boxes of advice are the best part of this book. They are short and to the point — a combination of advice from the doctor and encouragement to rely on your own instincts as a parent.

Although this is an appropriate book for new parents, I think there have been better titles written on the subject of caring for babies and children.

Reviewed by Marge Kars
Bronson Methodist Hospital
Kalamazoo MI


The author states in the introduction that this book is meant

This very practical, useful, and readable guide provides specific information for anyone preparing for international travel. It is accurately described as "the answer to what to do if you get sick in a foreign country. One in four travelers do, and most are not prepared."

In clear, concise language, this book describes what is important to address during the pre-departure planning phase and identifies potential health risks and hazards which could occur en route, abroad, or after returning home. Dr. Lange explains how to handle both the common and complex health issues faced by today's overseas traveler. While applicable to all travelers, it emphasizes the unique concerns of seniors. There are special sections for people retiring or relocating to another country and helpful advice for those with chronic health problems and disabilities. One of the many reasonable recommendations made is to have a pre-trip counseling session with one's family physician, covering such areas as current health and medications, personal records, insect-borne diseases, and common problems such as diarrhea, jet lag and motion sickness. Immunizations (basic, required, and recommended) are thoroughly reviewed.

Specific health concerns discussed include heart disease, high blood pressure, circulatory insufficiency, pulmonary disease, diabetes, arthritis, nervous conditions, and handicapped travelers. The "Guide" contains several checklists, including what medical supplies to bring, preventive medical preparations to make prior to leaving, a comprehensive list of infectious diseases and how to protect against them, important insurance information, and how to get medical help abroad. Other chapters address environmental and climatic safeguards, food and water precautions, and driving safety. The "Retirement and Relocation Abroad" section supplements medical preparation and psychological issues already given with some additional guidance: "Culture shock and cultural adjustment must be considered, prepared for, and adjusted to." The medical and psychological factors contributing to a successful adjustment are worth reviewing.

This is a wonderful book identifying each step for taking the initiative for comprehensive health planning prior to travel. The index is thorough and the type size is larger than that in most standard texts.

*Reviewed by Joy Harriman*
*Mobile Infirmary Medical Center*
*Mobile AL*

This book is divided into three sections: an overview of nutritional issues with AIDS; recipes and nutritional values; and an index by food type or recipe type, along with an alphabetical index. The authors suggest in the introduction that Eating Positive is a "primer for preparing food for the HIV-positive person experiencing some special dietary problems, and a guide to creating and eating the right food for the right person on the right diet, at the right time in the right form."

Chapters are arranged by type of diet: clear liquid, full liquid, fiber-restricted, B.R.A.T. (bananas, rice, applesauce, and tea), lactose-free, high-fiber, bland, high-protein/high-calorie. Each chapter begins with a description of the diet and foods that can be included, as well as foods that should be excluded. The primary purpose of each diet is included in its description.

The bulk of the book is made up of recipes from each of the diets. Recipes are listed in order of preparation difficulty, with easier recipes first. Nutritional values are included with each. The authors included the B.R.A.T. diet despite the fact that it is not considered an "official" diet, because it is used frequently by people living with HIV or by their care givers. I mention this diet specifically because its inclusion in the book demonstrates the attention to the individuals who will use this title. That focus is one of the things that makes this a valuable resource.

This is an important resource for consumer health libraries, and I highly recommend it.

Reviewed by Marge Kars Bronson Methodist Hospital Kalamazoo MI


This health diary has an easy checklist format to record individual physical conditions, symptoms, medications, and diets. It is designed for people with chronic conditions, injuries or recent surgeries to record their daily progress. The book can also be used by health-conscious individuals to monitor vitamin intakes and herbal regimens. For each day, there are sections to monitor weight, blood pressure, sugar level, drugs/medications, vitamins or herbs, physical activity, pain/discomfort, skin changes, conditions and symptoms, daily diet, weather, and comments. This format is flexible enough for people to pick and use pertinent areas for individual conditions and purposes. A person with diabetes could use the date area to record blood pressure and sugar level, the diet area to record meals, and the drug, physical activity, and conditions/symptoms areas to record the effects of drugs and foods on daily well-being. A health enthusiast could use the diet, vitamins/herbs, and physical activity areas to record the effects of these on his or her health. There is space at the end of the diary for additional health records, including personal medical history, results of medical tests, pharmacy information, data on insurance and health care providers, notes and questions, plus a glossary and vinyl card holders.

Though MemoryMinder does not contain substantial health information for libraries, it is a very useful health management tool to recommend to consumers.

Reviewed by Lily W. Liu Arkansas Children's Hospital Little Rock AK
**Current Book Reviews**

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<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Kuhn, C.</td>
<td>Buzzed: the straight dope about the most used and abused drugs from alcohol to ecstasy. Library Journal, 1998, 123(5):59. (E. Weaver)</td>
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Harrington Park Press is an imprint of Haworth Press, and seems to be the outlet by which Haworth repackages single journal issues (in this case, the *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, v. 2, no. 1, 1998) to sell as individual items. This may strike some as a slick money-making maneuver, but to be fair, Haworth Press provides this information in the publicity material and on the title page. It also makes a healthcare-themed issue available at a reasonable price to libraries who are not likely to subscribe to this journal. The journal itself is indexed only by some quite specialized indexing services, so this little quasi-monograph would be lost to healthcare libraries without this method of issuance. The volume comprises seven articles on the topics of surviving sexual abuse, domestic violence, rural lesbians, lesbians of color, and aging lesbians. It begins and ends with articles discussing the need for improved communication and dialogue between lesbians and health care providers. The contributors are all from the professorial ranks in the fields of sociology and social work, nursing, medicine, psychology, and women’s studies.

(Continued on page 15)

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<td>Gaynor, A. Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Cosmetic Surgery but Couldn’t Afford to Ask: a complete look at the latest techniques and why they are safer and less expensive. <em>Library Journal</em>, 1998, 123(8):131. (S.B. Hagloch)</td>
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The theme that emerges from nearly every article is the ignorance and acute discomfort many health care providers demonstrate when dealing with lesbian clients. Some of the first-hand accounts by various patients are painful to read and unfortunately their experiences are occasionally reduced to academic jargonese such as "...lesbians of color contend...

with many interactional stimuli in health care." It might have been worth the effort to obtain an article or two from lesbian health care practitioners for their insights into this difficult relationship.

**Gateways to Improving Lesbian Health and Health Care** is not really intended for the consumer audience. Academic in tone and method, it may not be especially appealing to a primary care practitioner looking for guidelines and practical knowledge, either. It does, however, give voice to a population of patients who may not be particularly well or sensitively served by the health care system and its practitioners. It addresses a

(Continued on page 16)

For many women, menopause is a difficult process to go through, not only from a physiological perspective, but also from a psychological and a social one. Menopause can be seen as a time of loss—loss of the ability to have children, loss of youth as a woman enters mid-life, loss of the body once known. Menopause may be even more difficult when it is brought on abruptly by surgery. A woman does not have the "luxury" of progressing through menopause over a number of years, and as the author of this book states, there are few resources about menopause that include information for those who have had radical hysterectomies.

Anne Herrmann suffered from endometriosis and had a radical hysterectomy when she was in her early forties. Writing this autobiographical book may have been a cathartic exercise for her as she discusses the loss of her previous identity, her ovaries and uterus, and other major losses suffered throughout her life. The book consists of letters, each one written (but not sent) to a different person. For example, she writes one to her mother, who died of cancer; to her father, who was lost to her because he traveled extensively on business and also because he was a philanderer; to her ex-lover, who left her for another woman. While the concept of loss, in addition to what was lost through the hysterectomy, is evident in some letters, in others it is not, leaving the reader to ponder the reason for their inclusion. For the most part, however, the letters are interesting to read, even when they did produce, in the reviewer, feelings of vague uneasiness. (Who is this woman and why does she want to share these intimacies with me and other strangers?)

It is difficult to know to whom this book would appeal. Whose information needs would it satisfy? Someone who is looking for an overview of the physical and emotional ramifications of a radical hysterectomy will be disappointed. No letter focuses primarily on the aftereffects of this type of surgery.
BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from page 16)
rather discussions of after-effects are intricately woven throughout the book. The style of writing reflects Herrmann's background as a professor of English. It is not a scholarly work, but neither does it seem to have been written for the mass market. The style of writing would appeal more to people with higher levels of education.

Does it belong in a consumer health collection? Only if no other books provide more substantial information on radical hysterectomies. This book does belong in an academic library, especially one that includes resources for people interested in women's health, women's studies, or psychology.

Reviewed by Lynda M. Baker, Ph.D.
Library & Info Science Program
Wayne State University
Detroit MI


"Only the dead are never anxious" is just one of many maxims scattered throughout the book, serving to reinforce or summarize a point being made at the time as well as to break up the text. Zuercher-White, a psychologist with Kaiser Permanente, describes her book as a self-help program and urges the reader to think of it as a "working tool, not another self-help book to browse through." It is written for people who suffer from panic disorder with or without agoraphobia, people who have had a panic attack and want to prevent the development of panic disorder, people diagnosed with agoraphobia without a history of panic disorder and people who have some specific phobias. The methods used to overcome attacks and instructions on using this manual. The following two sections are the work part of the manual. It is worthwhile noting that, depending on which issues are stumbling blocks, the reader will be directed to pertinent sections so that not every page has to be read. Section Two covers the physiology of fear and panic, breathing retraining, targeting thoughts and beliefs about panic and anxiety, and overcoming the fear of physical symptoms of panic. Section Three includes assessing the extent of your panic disorder and mastering fearful situations by working on specific goals. The final section discusses topics such as accepting feelings, coping with stress, and setbacks.

Informative case studies are used throughout to illustrate situations and techniques. Ten worksheets scattered at appropriate places throughout the text are also collected as an appendix for easy photocopying. References and a resource list of organizations and support groups are also included. Easy to read and with a logical format, this is a good addition to self-help collections.

Reviewed by Kate Kelly
Mass. General Hospital
Boston MA.
The Medicare Answer Book. By Connacht Cash.

"Dealing with...Medicare...is not usually high on anyone's list of fun things to do." Were truer words ever spoken? Connacht Cash, a consultant for long term planning issues and risk management, has written a basic reference manual to demystify Medicare and warn readers about its shortfalls.

Cash's format is to define her terms (Medicare Parts A and B, Medigap and Medicaid), describe types of coverage available, suggest questions to ask, instruct how to challenge treatment and payment denials, and show how to keep track of claims. Throughout the book, she shows samples of application and claim forms and answers frequently asked questions. The graphics and large print make manageable a book that most people would be loath to read unless circumstances forced them to.

Cash gives basics such as the enrollment periods for Parts A and B, and describes what documentation to bring when applying. She reminds readers that Medicare is not just for the elderly—the disabled and people being treated for kidney failure may also be eligible, although Medicare's definition of "disabled" is extremely stringent. Chapters 5 and 8 give excellent summaries of Medicare's limitations, including types of medical equipment Medicare will and will not cover.

Chapters 10 and 11 define types of Medigap and managed care policies that may supplement or replace Medicare coverage. The author provides sample worksheets for comparing policies and encourages readers to use resources like Best's Insurance Reports to evaluate them. After noting several times that Medicare does not cover long term care, she briefly discusses advantages to the patient and serious disadvantages to the family of using Medicaid to pay for long term care.

Cash stays far away from Medicare controversies. She does not discuss rising premiums, the capriciousness of "reasonable and allowable" charges, or the viability of the Medicare system for younger generations. In the section on "negotiating" fees with physicians, she recommends either using only doctors participating in Medicare or asking physicians if they will accept assignment.

This is a logical and readable presentation on Medicare, with a useful appendix of addresses of Medicare carriers and intermediaries, nursing home licensing agencies, insurance departments, agencies on aging, and more. Highly recommended for consumer health collections.

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CHI Directory Information

Please remember to fill in the National Consumer Health Library Directory on the Web! Go to http://www.njc.org/caphis/ for more information.
Library Journal Resources

by Nancy Crossfield,
CAPHIS Book Review Editor

Special collection development sections of recent issues of Library Journal include the following:


This useful selection tool contains over 40 pages of titles and publishers' ads. "Get Heart Smart," by Janet Schneider, is an annotated list of cardiology books, journals, videos, other media, and heart-related associations. Most books were published from 1995 through the present, with topics ranging from self-care or preventive lifestyles to heart diseases and surgery. "Subject Listings," compiled by Kathy Kleibacker, includes citations for more than 450 recent and forthcoming titles organized in 51 categories, including two full pages of alternative medicine references. Besides the expected topics, some materials are included on caregiver support, environmental risks, medical consumerism, and pain therapies. Publishers' blurbs and inserts provide still other current and forthcoming titles.


This annotated list describes 32 books, 3 videos, and several Web sites on mood disorders and mental health. Categories include general works on depression, medications (the author advises collecting "current titles reflecting the full breadth of antidepressants, as well as newly popular herbal alternatives"), alternative healing, special populations (women, men, youth), and the always-popular memoirs. Essential items are starred. This is a good starting place if your CHI collection needs work on the mind-body connection.

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Book Reviewers Needed

Nancy Crossfield is the book review editor for Consumer Connections. Nancy Crossfield is currently looking for book reviewers to help review books obtained or sent to us. Please contact Nancy if you are interested in taking on this role. Nancy is also looking for materials to review from publishers, or for suggestions from members. Please contact her. Email and phone number information is located on page 2 of this newsletter.

Other opportunities are available to anyone who is interested in doing consumer health/patient education related book reviews. Contact Janet Coggan, book review editor for the MLA Bulletin or Kellie Kaneshiro at Medical Reference Services Quarterly, 317-274-1612, phone or 317-274-4056, fax.
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CAPHIS Section Webpage is at: http://www.njc.org/caphis/

The MLA Web site: http://www.mlanet.org/

In this issue. . .

The Librarian’s Role in Providing CHI  page 5
CAPHIS Update  page 6
Articles from the Literature  page 7
Book Reviews  page 8
Library Journal Resources  page 19