

# Book Reviews

## Beyond Medicare: Achieving Long-Term Care Security

Malvin Schechter

*Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1993, 159 pp., \$35.95*

MALVIN SCHECHTER PRESENTS AN EXCELLENT case for national healthcare reform. His background work on the history of medical care, its costs, and its administrative structure provides an understanding of the need for major healthcare reform in our country. All members of Congress—or at least their legislative assistants—should treat themselves to a reading of this work.

The author has extensively researched the history of the healthcare system and,

specifically, Medicare. He clearly shows why our present system is so fragmented, costly, and weak in addressing an individual's medical problems. The system, he maintains, protects us against pauperization from hospitalization but not from long-term care. His analysis makes it clear that major cost reduction with improvement in overall health status and quality of life can be obtained only through a comprehensive system that recognizes the whole continuum of a disease.

However, Schechter proposes a costly system of care. *Beyond Medicare* falls into the trap of proposing social good for all without a complete cost-benefit analysis. Schechter does anticipate savings in program administration under a common payer. But, having prepared his audience for a wonderful kill, he misses an opportunity to use available statistics

about the immense cost savings of caring for a person throughout the continuum. The major cost of hospitalization is not generated within the hospital walls, but lies in the fact that the healthcare system pays little attention to the factors that caused the hospitalization. An excellent example of how a system can obtain savings is a pilot project conducted by Blue Cross/Blue Shield in Florida. There, case management and risk management gleaned major savings for healthcare purchasers.

Even with these shortcomings, *Beyond Medicare* can help us make a significant change in Medicare strategy. Healthcare leaders should buy copies for all their legislators as they debate Medicare's future.

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### BOOK BRIEFS

#### Ethical and Legal Issues in AIDS Research

*Joni N. Gray, Phillip M. Lyons, Jr., and Gary B. Melton, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995, 199 pp., \$15.95 (paperback), \$42 (hardcover)*

This book focuses on AIDS research (particularly psychosocial research) but is applicable to any research involving human participants. The book treats overarching ethical problems (such as the balance between individual privacy and public health, informed consent, and confidentiality), as well as technical legal issues (such as the duty to protect third parties and legal protection of confidentiality).

#### Assisted Living for the Frail and Elderly: Innovations in Design, Management, and Financing

*Victor Regnier, Jennifer Hamilton, and Suzie Yatabe, Columbia University*

*Press, New York City, 1995, 271 pp., \$39.50*

*Assisted Living* describes a variety of approaches to this growing residential alternative to long-term care facilities. The text is sprinkled with photos and floor plans from numerous facilities the authors found most innovative and useful in their study of hundreds of assisted living facilities in the United States and Europe. Chapters discuss how to develop the project concept, design the physical environment, manage a therapeutic environment, and finance construction and ongoing operations.

#### The Medical Care System: A Conceptual Model

*Michael J. Long, AUPHU Press/Health Administration Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 1994, 176 pp., \$32 (paperback)*

Written for policymakers, healthcare providers, and students, this book dis-

cusses the medical care system in an economic and social context. It distinguishes between healthcare and medical care and examines such topics as how social values influence the system, how to determine the number and type of services required, how and to what extent access and need can be reconciled, and how specific legislative actions affect the various types of medical care services.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

**Bringing the Hospital Home: Ethical and Social Implications of High-Tech Home Care**, John D. Arras, ed., Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995

**Entrusted: The Moral Responsibilities of Trusteeship**, David H. Smith, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 1995