

Preface

MANAGERS OF LONG-TERM care services and programs face the fundamental management challenges of all administrators. However, long-term care involves a special twist that is different from hospitals, managed care, or other facets of the healthcare delivery system. Clients have serious, long-term problems and may remain with the organization until they die. Caregivers are also important clients, and many are stressed; care may be as much for the caregiver as the client. Financial operations in a long-term care organization may be even more complicated than for acute or ambulatory care, and organizational relationships within the long-term care organization are many and complex.

The purposes of this book are threefold: (1) to introduce students to basic management functions and how they play out in long-term care; (2) to provide those who have come into long-term care with no formal management training a background in management concepts; and (3) to explicate for those already skilled in management concepts how long-term care differs from other healthcare settings. This book does not purport to be a detailed description of management theories, nor a comprehensive delineation of the myriad regulations and laws pertaining to all aspects of healthcare delivery or long-term care. Rather, this book is a structured introduction to

management concepts with application to a variety of long-term care settings. The intent is not to provide all of the “answers”—an unrealistic goal for any management text—but to provoke the thinking required for decision making, provide a framework for the issues, and offer sources to pursue for further information.

The first section is an introduction to management, to long-term care services, and to clients of long-term care services. This section offers definitions and an overview of the context of long-term care management. Chapter 1 defines management, offering definitions of the manager’s functions and the distinguishing characteristics that make a manager a leader. Chapter 2 introduces the field of long-term care services, its structure, and its financing. Chapter 3 describes the clients: the reason that long-term care services exist.

Part II covers specific management functions, with each chapter devoted to a basic function. Each chapter defines and describes the management function and its key concepts, principles, and select tools. Where appropriate, the book distinguishes how managing long-term care differs from managing other types of healthcare organizations. It also highlights issues a manager is likely to encounter. Each chapter cites examples taken from real-world incidents. These chapters do not attempt to cover every possible situation a manager might encounter, rather, they attempt to identify salient themes and suggest an approach for decision making and action.

Part III focuses on the career of the individual and describes the move from manager to leader, the value of professional association membership, self-assessment of management style, and the importance of life-long learning.