Elder Abuse Prevention: Emerging Trends and Promising Strategies

This book describes what has been done and what remains to be done to prevent elder abuse, treat its effects, and ensure justice. It further addresses the broader need to fortify our long-term care, protective service, and legal systems to meet the new and imminent demands of a burgeoning elderly population.

Drawing from over twenty years of experience helping communities improve their response to elder abuse, Lisa Nerenberg describes what agencies, communities, tribes, states, and national organizations are doing to prevent abuse, treat its effects, and ensure justice. She further explores what remains to be done and offers a plan for the future. In doing so, she addresses the broader challenges of fortifying the long-term care, protective service, and legal systems to meet the new and imminent demands of a burgeoning elderly population. In short, the book is about making communities safer places to grow old.

Ms. Nerenberg begins by exploring trends that have shaped or defined practice in the field of elder abuse prevention including the Supreme Court’s Olmstead decision; a shift in focus from protecting to empowering victims; an increasingly multicultural elderly population; the “globalization” of the field; and heightened understanding of the “psychology of victimization” (or why victims do what they do and perhaps more importantly, why they often don’t do what professionals think they should). She further describes eight models and theories on which practice has been based ranging from the widely recognized adult protective service and domestic violence prevention models to lesser-known approaches such as the family preservation and restorative justice models. She describes specific interventions and approaches that each model has contributed, their benefits and limitations, what is known about their impact, and factors that dictate what responses are appropriate to specific settings and situations.

In addition to describing techniques used by individual practitioners, the author outlines strategies and services that agencies, communities, states, tribes, courts, and national organizations have designed, which include elder forensics centers, elder courts, family justice centers, elder shelters, "hybrid" multidisciplinary teams, fraud prevention programs, support groups, restorative justice programs, and culturally specific outreach campaigns. She details progressive public policy initiatives, which range from statutes that provide for the mandatory reporting of deaths in nursing homes, to efforts to improve the collection and distribution