



Improving Care for the End of Life: A Sourcebook for Health Care Managers and Clinicians

Joanne Lynn, Janice Lynch Schuster, Andrea Kabcenell

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A health care provider who wants to make life better for those nearing the end of life will find exactly what his or her organization needs in this sourcebook. Each chapter provides authoritative and comprehensive guidance on how to make significant improvements in America's health care system--right away. The ideas are proven, and the stories of teams that have put them to use will inspire and enlighten.

As public sentiment and far too many research studies have shown, the health care system falls short in treating pain, in communicating with patients and their loved ones, and in helping dying patients live well despite disease. This is the only book that helps health care professionals use rapid cycles of innovation and measurement, a method that will enable any manager or provider in any health care system to improve care demonstrably within a few months.

This compilation of insights, advice, pointers, tools, and resources relies heavily on the stories of the four dozen teams who shared in a yearlong collaboration to learn how to improve care at the end of life.

Sponsored by the Center to Improve Care of the Dying and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, this "Breakthrough Series Collaborative" brought together teams from the nation's leading hospitals, hospices, and health care organizations. Each tackled a series of problems that were affecting their patients. Led by Joanne Lynn and Andrea Kabcenell, the Breakthrough Series teams made changes in four critical areas: controlling pain and other symptoms; improving advance care planning; helping and comforting patients and families; and developing continuity of care. Nearly all made substantial improvements, and stories of successful changes highlight every chapter.

Concerned clinicians and others will find here an effective approach to improving symptom management and other areas of care, while those interested in reform will discover ways to promote and implement it. The book provides specific information on all major causes of death and describes opportunities for improving the quality of life for those affected by them.

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