

Preface

Since publication of the first edition of the *Handbook of Pain Relief in Older Adults*, much has changed. Drugs once felt to be safer for older adults have been removed from the market for safety reasons. New guidelines on the management of persistent pain in older adults have been published, and, of course, new drugs and interventions have been developed. This second edition of the *Handbook of Pain Relief in Older Adults* once again provides useful information from some of the leading experts in the pain field from around the USA. Again there has been a reliance on evidence that has been gleaned from the scientific literature or from the research of the respective authors. Where data are inadequate to form definitive conclusions, the text uses the best evidence available and expert opinion, assimilating the knowledge from the rich clinical experience available to the authors along with the available clinical study experience. Wherever evidence is lacking, an effort has been made to express that.

The pain field is changing so rapidly, with so many new discoveries, that one must accept the fact that by the time this textbook is published, there may be new interventions available. However, the guiding principles of the *Handbook of Pain Relief in Older Adults* will persist long after the pages on the text are worn and frayed.

Intrinsic to this book is the concept that pain can always be treated and that treatment will be most effective when the etiology for the pain is understood. In addition to the treatment for pain, we cannot overlook the importance of interventions to prevent or minimize the onset of pain. Pain assessment must be a primary focus of any care plan aimed at managing pain.

Pain does not discriminate. People from any setting can experience pain. Efforts to assess and treat pain should be directed to the individual while recognizing that not all assessment tools or interventions will be as useful in all populations. Whatever instrument is used should be selected based on standardized testing in populations similar to individuals being evaluated.

Medications and medical science are only a small part of the equation for controlling pain in our society. The reader of this second edition of the *Handbook of Pain Relief in Older Adults* should learn new holistic strategies for helping to provide comfort and dignity for those who suffer from pain.

Finally, it is important to publicly acknowledge and thank those who contributed so much to allowing this book to become a reality. Greatly appreciated are the efforts of Mr. Richard Lansing, who recognized the need for this second edition and who encouraged us to move forward on this project. In addition, all the contributing authors, without whom this text would have never become a reality, also have my unending gratitude. They have truly raised the bar in producing such a quality product. Thanks also go to my loving family. Such unending support is crucial for such a work to come to fruition. My wife, Maybian, must be singled out for she is one of the greatest blessings in my life. Also, thanks to my loving daughters, Anna, Kate, Jane, and Molly, who bring such joy to the world and provide much needed relief and support in so many ways. Finally, and most importantly, praise is due to God. *Nisi Dominus, frustra.*

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