



Gerontological Social Work: International Perspectives

Jr, Merl C Hokenstad, Katherine Kendall

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In this fascinating book, leading international experts in gerontology and social work examine the conditions of older people in their respective native lands--Australia, Canada, West Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, and Sweden. In response to the need for world-wide sharing of information and research on one of the most dramatic developments of the twentieth century in the United States and throughout the western world--the aging of the populations--these professionals offer an international dimension and cross-cultural knowledge to social gerontology and gerontological social work. Emphasis is placed on the social service delivery system in each country together with an analysis of social work roles and activities. The informative articles include demographic notes, the socioeconomic characteristics of older people in each country, and the author's forecast of trends, issues, and future directions. These timely reviews of what has worked elsewhere may spark greater creativity among educators and practitioners in social work and gerontology in finding alternative solutions to the many problems professionals face as advocates and service providers for older adults.

Social work practitioners and educators examine social services for seniors in eight different industrialized countries. Each chapter--focusing on a different country--features:

- a review of the social service delivery system, providing information about its historical evolution and current organization
- a look at home care programs, as well as community based and institutionally based services
- a review of service availability and accessibility with consideration of how social services are coordinated with health care and other human services
- special attention is given to social work roles within the social service system, including an examination of direct service and planning/management roles
- a consideration of the importance and usefulness of social work in service provision for each country
- a brief analysis of current trends and future directions for gerontological social work and social services for the elderly.

The cross-national perspectives will highlight global trends in the industrial world and illuminate distinctions among countries, based upon a particular historical, political, and cultural context.

Gerontological Social Work provides a wider base for understanding and evaluating policies and programs in one's own country. Each analysis suggests new and different ways of solving problems and providing services. Social work professionals worldwide will learn successful methods of enabling the elderly to maintain maximum self-sufficiency and participate actively in society, thus insuring improved quality of life.



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