

*A Guide to  
Mental Health  
and  
Psychiatric Nursing*



*A Guide to  
Mental Health  
and  
Psychiatric Nursing*  
**THIRD EDITION**

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**A Guide to Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing**

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## Foreword

With an increase in awareness regarding the various roles a nurse can play, it has been widely accepted that she is strategically placed for performing the functions of a psychiatric nurse. This has led to an unprecedented and a rapid change in the responsibility shouldered by her. To equip her for this commendable task, an urgent need was felt in molding the curriculum at various levels. Every change in the syllabi should be well supported by good publications in the market that add to the knowledge and information.

The third edition of *A Guide to Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing* authored by Smt R Sreevani is a concrete step towards this end. This book is well written and structured so that it is straight-forward for the reader to make sense of the complex but essential aspects of psychiatric nursing.

Having read this textbook in its entirety, I would recommend it to both student nurses and qualified nurses alike. The breadth and depth of information presented is ample and well expressed thus encouraging a practical approach to psychiatric nursing. The author has successfully maintained easy-to-read style throughout, interspersing the text with the use of well-annotated diagrams and clear illustrations that not only brings the subject of psychiatric nursing to life but also ensures that the book is enjoyable and interesting to read. The inclusion of tabulated information contributes effectively to the comprehension of the text thus making the subject matter more accessible to the student.

For student nurses, pursuing their basic qualification, it provides a key handbook and will be a welcome addition to their bookshelves. Qualified nurses longing to expand their psychiatric nursing knowledge whilst studying for advanced psychiatric nursing course, but as yet unfamiliar with the approach or for others who simply want to improve their nursing skills, this book will undoubtedly be an essential acquisition. It encourages nurses to assess patients more thoroughly and have a more productive and informed input into patient care.

I am confident, this text will appeal to a wide audience within the nursing profession and is to be recommended in any nurses' library portfolio.



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## Preface to the Third Edition

*“The only man I know who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew each time he sees me. The rest go on with their old measurements and expect me to fit them.”*

— George Bernard Shaw

This remark is so truly applicable to the world around us. The world surrounding us is dynamic and keeps changing in some way or the other. If we have to fit into it, we have to understand this and adapt ourselves to the changing environment.

There has been a noteworthy change in the revised INC syllabus for undergraduate nursing students. As this publication was initially mooted to suit the immediate needs of the undergraduate nursing students, I had no other option but to revise the textbook accordingly and hence the third edition. A lot of hard work has gone into revamping the whole textbook not only in terms of the content matter but also with regard to the organization. This edition is significantly bigger than the second edition as it not only includes all the topics as per the revised INC syllabus but also a host of assessment formats and a drug guide at the end of the book. I strongly believe that the present organization of the text should aid in developing a comprehensive idea about the subject. While the assessment formats will help the nurse during clinical postings, the drug guide will help her understand the mode of administering the drugs and associated responsibilities.

### TEXT ORGANIZATION

As per the revised INC syllabus, the third edition includes chapters on Principles and Concepts of Mental Health Nursing, Therapeutic Communication and Nurse-Patient Relationship, Treatment Modalities and Therapies for Mental Disorders, Nursing Management for various Psychotic Disorders, Psychiatric Emergencies and Crisis Intervention, Legal Issues in Mental Health Nursing and Community Mental Health Nursing. A few review questions have been included at the end of each chapter.

A lot of illustrations in the form of figures, tables and boxes have been included wherever necessary for better understanding of the subject and improving the retention level in the students.

With these changes, I hope the revised third edition will meet most of the requirements of both the students and the faculty of psychiatric nursing at the undergraduate level.

**R Sreevani**



## Preface to the First Edition

The well-being of a human being has two facets viz., physical and mental health. However, the physical health of an individual has donned greater prominence over the mental health aspect. One need not go very far to seek an answer. Mental ailments have been considered a taboo in the society from time immemorial, resulting in their restriction to the various households than becoming public knowledge. Ignorance of mental health concepts and related ailments has also led to lower awareness levels among the masses. It is only in the recent past that due emphasis has been laid on mental health needs and practices. Commendable progress has been achieved in the related areas, which includes revision and upgradation of syllabi at various levels of education, identifying qualified people and appointing them in appropriate places for better monitoring of mental health care needs, and providing inputs to health care teams by conducting seminars and workshops.

The idea to come out with a guide on mental health and psychiatric nursing was conceived during my teaching experience when I found that the students of BSc Nursing did not have a concise text covering their entire syllabus and were left wanting for adequate information on certain topics. An earnest effort has been made to include all such information in this publication. This guide has been compiled in line with the syllabus formulated by the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences for BSc Nursing Course.

### TEXT ORGANIZATION

The guide consists of 16 chapters. The highlights are as under:

Chapter 1 deals with the Concept of Mental Health and Mental Illness. The chapter ends with various Etiological Factors and Classification of Mental Disorders.

Chapter 2 covers the Development of Psychiatry and Psychiatric Nursing and also includes History Taking and Mental Status Examination formats.

Chapters 5, 7 and 9 include a very detailed description of the Nursing Management of Functional Psychiatric Disorders, Neurotic Disorders and Psychoactive Substance Use, which is in accordance with the nursing process, making the contents more suitable and practical.

Chapter 11 has been devoted to Child Psychiatric Nursing, in which an array of details has been provided, ranging from mental retardation, its rehabilitation, complete care, steps in teaching skills to mentally retarded children, thus accommodating nursing students interested in obtaining an in-depth knowledge on the subject.

Chapter 12 deals with Therapeutic Modalities in Psychiatry. The role of a nurse in administering various psychotropic drugs to patients, care of a patient undergoing ECT has been highlighted in this chapter. It also includes psychological therapies, therapeutic milieu and activity therapy. Suggested activities for psychiatric patients with various psychiatric disorders have also been included.

Chapter 14 covers the Various Statutes in Legal Psychiatry and their Provisions affecting the role of a nurse, and also a variety of roles that she has to do in different legal situations.

Chapter 15 gives an account of the Role of a Nurse in the Community, and also in prevention of mental disorders and rehabilitation.

Psychiatric Emergencies though not included in the prescribed syllabus, has been covered in chapter 16 with appropriate references to previous chapters for details on management.

The book has for the most part employed the ICD system (International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems-10) in describing various psychiatric disorders. Theoretical aspects have been well-complemented by practical aspects where necessary, enabling the students to equip themselves better for their future endeavors.

The book also includes an exhaustive glossary of various terms used in describing common psychiatric disorders, which is a must for gaining a broad understanding of the subject. Each chapter is followed by certain important questions culled out from the previous examinations allowing the students to get an idea of what is expected of them. A list of references has been furnished at the end of the guide for further reading.

The matter has been presented in simple language, and the guide being comprehensive, caters to the needs of an average student at the graduate level. However, students of General Nursing, MSc Nursing and other mental health professionals interested in getting an overview may also find it useful.

After going through the book the students should be able to not only manage their exams on Psychiatric Nursing, but also meet the mental health care needs of patients more effectively.

All constructive suggestions from the readers in making this guide more valuable and helpful will be earnestly solicited.

**R Sreevani**

## Acknowledgments

I would like to go on record to express my deep gratitude to M/s Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers for being instrumental in translating an idea mooted long ago into print, and also provide nursing students with a book on Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing in line with their syllabus.

I thank:

Dr K Reddemma (Professor of Nursing, NIMHANS, Bengaluru) for her valuable suggestions and guidance, and for accepting to write the Foreword for this book.

Mrs Chandramani BN, my Principal, for her encouragement and support.

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Dr Prasanthi N, PhD (Nursing), my colleague and friend, for the unstinted support and guidance provided during the review of the original manuscript, but for whose help this publication would still be a dream. Various inputs provided by her have added immense value to this publication.

My sisters, Ms Gowri and Ms Rama, and all my family members for their extensive help.



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