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Issues and Strategies for Nurse Leaders: Meeting Hospital Challenges Today. *Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. Oakbrook Terrace, IL: Joint Commission Resources, 2005, 167 pages, \$75.*

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Although not specifically oncology related, *Issues and Strategies for Nurse Leaders: Meeting Hospital Challenges Today* is a good resource for assisting nurse leaders or executives in successfully meeting challenges in today's fast-paced healthcare environment. Nurse managers and hospital administrators can and should use this book when initiating discussions about taking institutions from good to great. Although the book generally is a strong resource for what needs to be addressed in any healthcare organization, *Issues and Strategies* should not be used when more specific actions are desired because methods for putting the strategies into action are not readily outlined. This may be because each healthcare institution has its own set of issues, strengths, and weaknesses that will influence the implementation of any plan.

Chapter one gives an excellent example of how multidisciplinary care and open communication among disciplines should be developed. In addition, the chapter clearly defines roles that nurses should undertake. The "standards connection" on performance expectations for nurse executives translates the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) stan-

dards into easily understood responsibilities. Unfortunately, the text does not do the same for the role of frontline nurse manager.

Chapter two reviews in some detail the challenges that are related to the nursing shortage on a global scale. Issues surrounding nurses practicing in one country then moving to another are identified, and the problem of recruitment and retention is discussed. In the past, retaining nurses seems to have been overlooked. Today, however, nothing should be overlooked. Although retaining experienced nurses can be expensive compared to bringing in new graduates, the following issue is raised: When no new graduates can be brought in (i.e., nursing shortage), what is the alternative?

The remaining chapters offer possibilities for creating a work environment that will entice staff to stay. The text identifies staffing issues as the cause of many errors, including those related to medication. Sidebars explain the JCAHO standards and cite examples from some hospitals that have worked through identified problems; these are great descriptions of how to proceed correctly. However, in reality, financial and staffing constraints make these suggestions difficult to implement in any given hospital. For example, providing one day off each month for educational opportunities for each staff member or allocating five days per year away from the hospital setting with paid time off in addition to tuition expenses may create a financial strain that many hospitals cannot bear despite the importance of continuing education.

If some way existed to incorporate specific, detailed suggestions, including costs, to answer the JCAHO standards and issues of practice in today's healthcare environment, this book would be the bible of healthcare management. However, costs vary from area to area, making generalizing difficult at best, but *Issues and Strategies* is unique in that it discusses the hospital's need to be responsive to JCAHO standards as well as the needs of

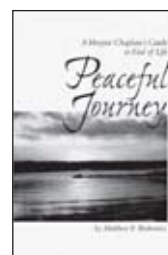
the hospital itself. Sidebars and tables are excellent in collating resource data to back up the text's topics.

Hospitals can use this text to initiate discussions regarding how to grow and develop continually in the face of current challenges. By incorporating the strategies outlined, hospital leaders can enhance their work environments and greatly improve patient and employee satisfaction. As well as augmenting the care given by nursing, all departments will benefit from applying the initiatives designed by the hospital workforce, which may lead to Magnet status from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. *Issues and Strategies* gives organizations a starting point. Hospital leaders will need to take on the responsibility of putting the strategies into play in ways that will work for their institutions.

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Peaceful Journey: A Hospice Chaplain's Guide to End of Life. *Matthew P. Binkewicz. Ithaca, NY: Paramount Market Publishing, 2005, 160 pages, \$19.95.*

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Peaceful Journey: A Hospice Chaplain's Guide to End of Life is written by a long-term hospice chaplain and ordained Russian Orthodox minister who uses clinical narratives to help patients and their caregivers cope with their fears and concerns related to any terminal illness. Nurse readers will benefit from 10 stories about the chaplain's response to spiritual questions raised by secular and religious patients. Insights for oncology nurses from this book are theologic, not specifically related to the end of life.

After two brief sections defining hospice and the chaplain's role, the author uses patient stories as a context to address issues of dementia, being alone, suffering, disability, family

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