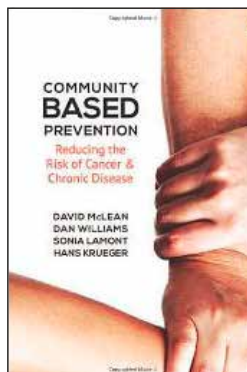


Book Reviews

COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION

REDUCING THE RISK OF CANCER AND CHRONIC DISEASES

David McLean, Dan Williams, Sonia Lamont, Hans Krueger, 13 Chapters, 224 pages, ISBN-10: 144264530X, ISBN-13: 978-1442645301. P£38.99



This book sets out a model for disease prevention through community engagement and education. Community Prevention Educators (CPE) are the agents of change. The book states its purpose as dual: to describe the benefits of the CPE; to describe the important elements of a CPE programme so that others may inform their own prevention strategy.

The book is divided into three parts, A, B, and C. The first part describes the CPE and discusses prevention of cancer and chronic disease as well as the CPE programme in British Columbia, “the touchstone” for the book. The second part moves on to describe five programmes in North Karelia, Northern Ireland, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Manitoba. Comparison between these programmes and British Columbia is undertaken

Part C describes the important elements of a community based prevention programme, and lists nine success factors that arise from the analysis of the programmes described in part B. The final three chapters cover conceptual frameworks, tracking outcomes and evaluation and finally a conclusion centering on the need for sustained effort and investment in prevention.

Overall this book appears as a reasonable guide for those contemplating a community-based prevention programme. It follows a methodical process in analysis of the touchtone programme followed by analysis of the comparators. Heavy going at times and perhaps a little long winded, but strangely the chapters I engaged with the most were towards the end. Chapter 11 Establishing a Foundation: Conceptual Frameworks laid out some theory and discussed the frameworks and models used or involved. Diffusion of Innovations and Network Analysis played to my weakness for an attractive model. Health promotion and health education, their differences, are also expounded upon. Some time is spent expanding and defining health promotion, which is relevant to the community-based prevention approach at the centre of the book. Its always wise to throw in a German

philosopher, or two, in a chapter like this and in this case (Habermas) I confess I resorted to the internet for the background on Emancipatory Knowledge.

The penultimate chapter dealt with evaluation and I would have liked this topic to have arrived earlier in the book considering the importance of meaningful evaluation. The authors did spend time setting out nine principles to evaluation of a CPE-like programme.

While the book triggers initial curiosity because of the local interest regarding Action Cancer activities in Northern Ireland, there is enough to sustain interest in those looking for information community based programmes and health promotion.

David Mills

AN EVERYDAY MIRACLE

James Dornan, Blackstaff Press Ltd. 184 pages, ISBN:9780856409097. Price: £8.49



This is a delightful little book written in an everyday language and easy to read. It resembles a selection of 26 short stories or one-act plays. Its author is a doctor who specialized in diseases of pregnancy and childbirth. The characters in the stories/plays are patients the author has treated for these conditions. The story lines resemble the case histories of these patients. The author helpfully defines for the reader the medical terms he has used.

The book follows a historical account of obstetrics' development and refers to the 'art of obstetrics' following it through to the present day. Professor Dornan describes the changes that have taken place in services and facilities during pregnancy and delivery; from the home delivery, with very little help, to the modern delivery suite with their multidisciplinary teams of obstetrician, midwife, paediatrician and anaesthetist in today's hospitals.

There is a welcome reassurance that the names of the patients have been changed to protect their privacy. He has not given any indication who he thinks the readers may be — general public, professionals, students (medical, nursing or drama) or the lay person. He lists many of his colleagues, all of whom are well-known specialists in obstetrics in Northern Ireland, to illustrate the stories. At the conclusion we are left not knowing whether Professor Dornan considers childbirth a natural or supernatural process, i.e. a miracle!

Ethna O’Gorman