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REVIEWS

TITLE INFORMATION

PERSONAL CARE HANDBOOK
Survival Beyond the Caregiver
Gloria Lopez
Trafford (144 pp.)
$19.99 paperback
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BOOK REVIEW

An experienced health care advocate shares a wealth of knowledge on the importance of developing and updating a personal medical dossier.

Lopez's (*My Personal Medical Journal*, 2010, etc.) compassionate, supportive, and authoritative perspective stems from decades spent working with children with disabilities and their families. She's a public speaker on medical documentation, and she's also raising a son who has spina bifida; as a result, Lopez recognizes firsthand the importance of ensuring continuity of care by having one's personal health care information written down, well organized, and readily accessible. Personally, she notes how much easier it was to use service agencies and state medical programs with proper preparation. This important book eases the burden of collating information with clear, concise instructions and numerous checklists. Perhaps most crucially, it offers forms on which one may enter health care specifics and update them; the author's simple instructions take the sting and the tedium out of record-keeping. Lopez stresses the importance of keeping data in understandable lay terms. She also addresses how her process can empower those who always wanted to take charge of their (or an elderly loved one's) health care data, but needed a launching point. Keeping information organized, Lopez says, can be simplified by using a three-ring binder with dividers, which should include medical forms, allergy alerts, caregiver guidelines, interview data, and items such as emergency contacts and daily medication charts. Most of the forms and procedures here are self-explanatory and created with simplicity and ease-of-reference in mind. But Lopez's guidebook may also provide readers with a learning experience by helping them become more proactive and vigilant about their health care.

An indispensable tool, particularly for caregivers.