



## **Personal Care Handbook: Survival Beyond the Caregiver**

Gloria Lopez

Trafford, 120 pages, (paperback) \$19.95, 978-1-4907-7284-4

(Reviewed: October 2016)

Chronic, long-term medical problems are one of life's serious challenges. As a mother of a child with the spinal condition Spina Bifida, author Gloria Lopez understands the importance of accurate medical records. *Personal Care Handbook: Survival Beyond the Caregiver* is her effort to help patients and caregivers organize medical information and daily care into one convenient record. Using simple layman's terms, Lopez demonstrates how to record day-to-day care and medical visits.

Providing accurate documentation can aid in a medical team's diagnosis and treatment plan and minimize medical errors, she points out. And it can help ensure continuity of care during a change of caregiver—or a patient's transition to adulthood. With this goal in mind, the handbook guides family and patients through a useful mix of forms, logs and questionnaires that aid in hiring and evaluating a caregiver, analyzing independent living facilities, examining transportation and medical equipment and documenting medical issues.

Throughout the handbook, Lopez provides common sense examples of ways to keep those with medical issues safe. For example, she points out that individuals with life-threatening food allergies should create a food allergy card. She recommends including the same information in Spanish. Not a Spanish speaker? Look for English/Spanish food labels to find the correct words for “seafood,” “nuts,” and other ingredients, she advises. She also points out how large, zippered art cases work well for holding x-rays, which should always remain with the patients or caregiver.

The 8X11 format of the handbook is ideal for photocopying multiple forms. And although there are occasional grammatical errors in the text, the author's experienced approach to creating an individual's medical record is an important contribution to the needs of patients and caregivers both.

Also available as an ebook.