

common type of abuse, it would have been helpful if it had also covered physical, emotional and financial abuse, and neglect. Also, it is confined to adults living in residential care homes whereas there is increasing evidence that the majority of abuse occurs in family homes where it can be extremely difficult to deal with. Neither does the document cover abuse in hospitals or other NHS settings where the role of social services may be less clear.

However, the document is clearly written and set out, and very user-friendly. It would be a valuable reference work as it contains some useful definitions, such as what constitutes sexual abuse and the criteria for meaningful consent to sexual activity. It specifies the responsibilities of the agencies involved, including the purchasing authorities and suggests ways in which multi-agency co-ordination should occur e.g. in the formation of adult protection committees. There is clearly laid out guidance for the investigation of abuse, although I felt the flow chart would have been more useful in the text rather than as an annex. I would challenge the assumption that social services will usually take the lead in any investigation. Although this is clearly recommended by the Law Commission, they do not always seem willing to do so in practice.

The final chapter consists of a checklist to identify what action needs to be taken to lower the risk of abuse and ensure a speedy and helpful response when it occurs. This would provide a useful reference point for all organisations involved in providing services for adults with learning disabilities.

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Individual and Community Responses to Trauma and Disaster. Edited by Robert J. Ursano, Brian G. McCaughey and Carol S. Fullerton. Cambridge University Press. 1994. Pp 442. £60.00 ISBN 0 521 41633 7.

The editors of this book are members of staff of the US Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Washington. Together they have an extensive experience of dealing with disasters of all kinds. The sub-title 'The structure of human chaos' encapsulates Ursano's view of the cognitive response to terror.

The 33 contributors represent very different experiences and models yet there is a remarkable degree of agreement and the

editors have achieved considerable continuity helped by their final overview. Shalev gives a good account of current views of debriefing following trauma while retaining a healthy scepticism about its effectiveness in preventing post-traumatic stress disorder.

Ulrik Malt gives focuses on the neglected area of the traumatic effects of individual accidents and several authors deal with technological catastrophes. The chapter on long-term sequelae of combat in World War II, Korea and Vietnam brings together valuable material which deserves further study. Although purporting to cover the life cycle, children receive scant attention and I did not find the chapter on children in war particularly helpful when facing the traumatised children of Rwanda and the Sudan.

The concept of PTSD has come to steal the limelight when traumatic events are considered and the alacrity with which the concept has been embraced by lawyers and litigants has induced an attitude of great scepticism among British psychiatrists.

Yet a historical review indicates that all of the phenomena described in the DSM-III and elsewhere were known to the ancients and that emotional consequences of disaster are universal. They account for major problems of resettlement after community disasters and considerable distress and disability in individuals affected.

This book fills a useful role in detailing the variety of disasters and disaster responses. What we need now is a book on prevention and treatment of the adverse effects of disaster but I hope that we can wait until there is a sound research base for it.

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Relative Values: the differing views of users, family carers and professionals on services for people with schizophrenia in the community. By Geoff Shepherd, Alison Murray and Matt Muijen. London: The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health. 1994. Pp 118. £10.00.

The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health has published this 118 page document. The principal researcher was Murray and the 'project manager' Shepherd; Muijen's role is not clear. It is also not clear whether the results were subject to peer review before