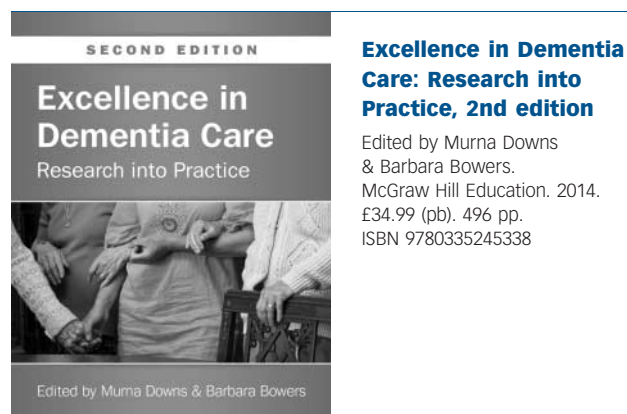


This is a very useful book for any prescriber feeling frustrated by their limited ability to control bipolar disorder, whether in the acutely disturbed manic state, the resistant depressive condition, the complex mixed affective state, or in persistently recurrent illness. The book is up to date to 2015 and drugs not yet licensed for the condition are included.

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**Excellence in Dementia Care: Research into Practice, 2nd edition**

Edited by Murna Downs & Barbara Bowers.  
McGraw Hill Education. 2014.  
£34.99 (pb). 496 pp.  
ISBN 9780335245338

*Excellence in Dementia Care: Research into Practice* is a book that demands attention, especially in an area where the best practice is not always well-publicised. However, the promise of the title raises expectations of academic rigour and of practical advice. This presents many challenges.

Style presents the first challenge. The book seeks to appeal to various audiences: practitioners and academics (in both health and social care), people with dementia, family members and policy makers. The style, therefore, has to compromise between these different groups' expectations. The compromise here is handled adroitly, combining elements of a student textbook (e.g. learning objectives for each chapter) with those of a practitioner's handbook (e.g. exercises and questions lending themselves to group discussion). The book does not quite meet the best standards for any of these genres – it is sometimes too chatty and under-referenced for a textbook, insufficiently didactic for a

handbook, and not always consistently up-to-date (a reference in a chapter to DSM-IV criteria was disappointing). Nonetheless, the compromise generally succeeds in offering something for everyone. There are hooks and discussions to engage all audiences, with many powerful case histories and each chapter starting with thought-provoking quotes. In particular, the concluding discussions on controversies in the field and pointers to further information will be helpful to most readers.

The second challenge is to choose content and depth of analysis for various points. Here the editors plumped more for breadth than depth. There are 27 chapters, divided into five general themes relating to dementia care: context, conceptualisation, best practice, care pathways, and promoting sustainable change. The breadth is impressive and the volume provides a referenced sourcebook for learning on many less accessible topics – such as the representation of people with dementia in the media. However, those wanting a deeper treatment of particular topics may need to supplement this book with other reading. The palliative care chapter, for example, offers only two pages on pain.

A further challenge is the choice of context. The wide-ranging geographical perspective is useful at a grand policy level. The sheer variety of contributors, from all types of academia and practice, provides many different viewpoints. There are some outstanding chapters – particularly those on selfhood and the body in dementia care, whole person assessment, ethics, and bereavement. However, practitioners may find that the content of some chapters appears less relevant in the UK where the social issues and organisation of services is markedly different from that described.

Perhaps it is questionable whether the content really matches the title. *BJPsych* readers using this as a textbook or reference source may want greater information on certain topics and a more consistently academic approach, while dementia care practitioners using it as a handbook might want the many exercises provided to be clearer in providing answers and practical approaches to the often thought-provoking questions they raise. However, almost anyone with any interest in this subject will learn something new from this book. It can be highly recommended for students or trainees seeking more information on dementia care practice, and for anyone concerned with health or social care policy seeking a well-researched and lively exposition of a diverse range of topics.

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