



Beyond Bedrails and Bingo: Myths, Truths, and the Future of America's Nursing Homes

Dave Devereaux

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Amplifying its explanations of how nursing homes function with recommendations for navigating their complexities, Beyond Bedrails and Bingo is an informative social science text.

Drawing on personal experiences working at nursing homes, Dave Devereaux's illuminating social science survey *Beyond Bedrails and Bingo* concerns how the institutions work in the United States.

Devereaux first started working at nursing homes in 1978, when he was sixteen years old. Later, he worked as a nursing home administrator, overseeing over seven hundred nursing homes and assisted living facilities in thirty-eight states. Drawing on these experiences, the book aims to demystify the field and show how its different pieces fit together. Thus, it comments on the strengths and weaknesses of nursing home operations in the face of contemporary socioeconomic shifts. It includes arguments about what the organizations need to function in addition to the emotional aspects of living in, or leaving a loved one in, nursing homes.

Many of its arguments are supported by outside studies and statistics, as where the book traces the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on workplace satisfaction and eventual staffing shortages. Future projections for nursing homes are also shared, and related topics are touched upon. For instance, the book discusses medical advances toward stopping and even reversing Alzheimer's disease. More sobering predictions, as with those relating to debt-laden states and diminished Social Security and Medicare trusts, also appear.

The topical chapters cover disparate topics including nursing home myths, the disrespect that nursing home patients sometimes endure, and the machinery needed to keep a nursing home working. Each includes a wealth of information, supported by illustrations and grids for clarity. Further, the chapters end with practical recommendations about navigating nursing home systems—what questions to ask, what to be on the lookout for, and how to trust one's intuition.

Indeed, patient advocacy is the thread that ties the otherwise varied chapters together. The book's work is also overlaid by assertions that patients are the most important part of nursing homes. Further, much effort is devoted to addressing the loneliness and helplessness sometimes felt by residents.

The prose is straightforward and informal, making complex information feel accessible. Direct addresses to the audience give it a down-to-earth sensibility as well. Further, despite the array of topics, the book's flow is clear thanks to its consistent internal organization. For instance, each chapter begins by presenting a topic relevant to nursing home operations, explores said topic in detail, and finishes with practical recommendations.

An informative social science survey, *Beyond Bedrails and Bingo* is a detailed and expansive survey of how nursing homes function in the United States.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (May 1, 2026)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to

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