

## Advocacy in Health Care: The Power of a Silent Constituency (Contemporary Issues in Biomedicine, Ethics, and Society)

Joan H. Marks

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The roles of both the consumer and the health advocate professional have become increasingly significant in to day's climate of "rationed" health care. It seems clear that the timely exchange of ideas among seasoned health care advocates is necessary if we are to deal with the complex problems of a technologically advanced so ciety seeking to ration its heath care in a truly humane way. Toward such a timely exchange, the first Confer ence on Advocacy in Health Care was organized by the Health Advocacy Program of Sarah Lawrence College and recently held. Advocacy in Health Care: The Power of a Silent Constituency is the proceedings of the conference and will, we believe, greatly extend our efforts to share both the problems and solutions that effective patient advocacy entails. Never before has the issue of advocating for special population groups by combining the resources of consumers and professionals been the exclusive focus of one volume. This book discusses the power of such an alignment and describes specific organizational techniques that have been effective in bringing about changes in the delivery system. The final section of the book, "Questions, Com ments and Answers," presents a selection of topics of special interest that surfaced during the open disc- vii viii Preface sion at the last conference session. The comments were forthright in their criticism of public policy, and the vigor of the argument underscored the vitality of the co alition between professionals and consumers.



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