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## Preface

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During the last decade, different medical and governmental organizations developed practice guidelines for the management of hospitalized patients with community-acquired pneumonia (CAP). These documents describe what can be defined as the “recommended care” of hospitalized patients with CAP based on the current scientific evidence. The ultimate goal of national guidelines is to move the local actual practice closer to the ideal practice recommended by these guidelines. In an attempt to reach this goal, national guideline documents were disseminated to institutions and health care personnel involved in the management of patients with CAP. It was supposed that such dissemination of national guidelines would alter care at the local level. At the present time, however, it is clear that relying on the passive dissemination of practice guidelines as the sole methodology to influence a change in practice is doomed to failure.

To drive local practice closer to the practice recommended by national guidelines, it is necessary to have an appropriate implementation plan. Why are the majority of institutions not implementing guidelines at the local level? One of the primary reasons is that health care workers in general are not aware of the process for guideline implementation.

The intent of this book is to outline a plan for implementation of a CAP practice guideline at the local hospital level. The recommendations described herein are based on a review of the literature in the area of practice guidelines as well as the author’s personal experience in developing and implementing CAP practice guidelines at the University of Louisville–affiliated hospitals.

As health systems struggle to improve quality of care with limited resources, the pressures to develop and implement CAP practice guidelines more effectively are bound to grow. This book is intended to help physicians, pharmacists, nurses, hospital administrators, and other health care workers interested in the implementation of national guidelines for the management of patients with CAP at the local hospital level.

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