Principles of Inpatient Psychiatry is geared to psychiatrists working in inpatient settings: residents, psychiatrists who occasionally provide inpatient care, and psychiatric "hospitalists" who specialize in the inpatient arena.

Inpatient settings contain the sickest psychiatric patients, such as those with a high risk of suicide, agitation requiring emergency management, or treatment-resistant psychosis and depression, all topics discussed in the book. Co-morbid general-medical illness is common, and the book focuses attention, supported by case examples, on medical and neuropsychiatric as well as general-psychiatric evaluation and management.

Chapters address special clinical problems, including first-episode psychosis, substance abuse, eating disorders, and legal issues on the inpatient service. The editors bring expertise to bear on a wide range of treatments, including psychopharmacologic, psychodynamic, and milieu approaches.