Basics of the U.S. Health Care System

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my mother, Joyce Robinson, who is a tremendous role model to me and who has always encouraged me to pursue my goals.

I would like to thank my husband, Donnie Niles, the love of my life, for his continued love and support. How lucky that I have my sister, Donna Berger, her husband, Vin, my brother, Greg, and my nephew and nieces, Coby, Emily, and Jenna, in my life . . . and of course, my loyal and dear friend, Richard Gibney and our constant canine companion, Maisy McNabb.

On a professional note, I would like to also thank Dr. Kendra Boggess, who gave me my first opportunity to teach full-time and my first boss, Dr. Taimi Carnahan, who gave me my first job in health care. I would also like to thank Mike Brown at Jones and Bartlett Publishers who provided me with this opportunity to write my first textbook. Ms. Catie Heverling, Editorial Assistant at Jones and Bartlett, and Katy Whipple of Absolute Services were very helpful to me in making this a reality.
I am writing this textbook because I would like to increase students' awareness of healthcare issues that impact them as US citizens.

Here are just two examples of how the US healthcare system currently operates. One of my undergraduate students is no longer qualified under her parents' healthcare coverage because she is over 25 years of age. She has asthma, a respiratory condition that could cause her to stop breathing, but because she can't afford the medicine for her condition, she goes without. She feels she has no choice. A friend of mine is undergoing chemotherapy and radiation for breast cancer treatment. Her doctor suggested she take a shot prior to her treatment that would alleviate her nausea so she could continue to work and take care of her family. The shot costs $2000. Her insurance company would not pay for it, and she could not afford to pay for it herself. So, she suffered while continuing to work and take care of her family. We are the most powerful country in the world and have been lauded internationally for our state-of-the-art medical technology and our advances in research to prevent disease. Yet unfortunate examples like this occur and will continue to occur until there is some type of healthcare system reform that will focus on affordable and accessible health care.
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