

Basics of the U.S. Health Care System

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Nancy J. Niles is in her seventh year of full-time undergraduate teaching. She is in her third year of teaching undergraduate business and healthcare management classes in the AACSB-accredited Department of Business Administration at Lander University in Greenwood, South Carolina, having spent four years teaching in the Department of Business Administration at Concord University in Athens, West Virginia. She became very interested in health issues as a result of spending two tours with the US Peace Corps in Senegal, West Africa. She focused on community assessment and development, obtaining funding for business and health-related projects. Her professional experience also includes managing the New York State lead poisoning prevention program and managing a small business development center in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

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Preface

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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