

Global Health Systems

Comparing Strategies for Delivering Health Services

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Dedication

First and foremost, we dedicate this book to all of the consumers around the world who have not yet realized *true access* to health care.

—Margie Lovett-Scott and Faith Prather

I personally dedicate this book to my family, especially my children Cassandra, Matthew, Johnny, Terri, Joanne, and Debbie, for their patience and support. Special thanks to my grandson, Bernard (BJ) Lewis, for his creative and inspirational ideas for the book. Additionally, I wish to thank my friends and colleagues—Dr. Elizabeth Heavey for her ongoing support and encouragement; Dr. Katherine Detherage for her reviews and edits; my department chair, Dr. Kathleen Peterson; and our department secretary, Ms. Laurie Allen—for their unrelenting encouragement and support from beginning to end.

—Margie Lovett-Scott



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Preface

No matter where we choose to reside, we live, work, and play in a global society. The healthcare world is changing. Healthcare systems are striving to become transparent while promising to uphold quality standards, execute seamless processes, and contain costs. In light of this, healthcare professionals are expected to demonstrate outcomes-based performance as they respond to consumer needs. As discussions unfolded in class each year about the major challenges and disparities in the United States healthcare system, our interest in writing this book mounted, particularly as it was clear that the challenges outweighed the opportunities.

This text is written for undergraduate and beginning graduate students, professors, healthcare administrators, public health clinicians and administrators, anyone studying for, or preparing to enter, healthcare administration, and those actively involved in teaching, planning, or improving healthcare systems. The text provides a useful tool for educators in igniting interaction in the classroom. A key feature of the text is the richness and diversity of the case scenarios, which challenge students to think critically and encourage reflective and timely application of the information presented in the text. The scenarios provide limitless opportunities for the professor to engage learners and assess their level of knowledge. Discussion questions can easily be converted to more formal tests of knowledge gained. The Eight Factor Model provides a clear, user-friendly framework from which to assess each country discussed in the text in attempting to determine the extent to which countries provide *true access* to health care and services. Learners are encouraged to conceptualize the information described in the model to assist them in creating their own framework for action in addressing such things as healthcare quality, costs, and true access. Readability is enhanced by this organizing framework. The text presents an overview and synthesis of health care in 11 countries, and challenges and opportunities for transforming systems and maximizing outcomes through vision and leadership. The authors have strived to accurately represent the countries discussed,

and believe the text is a valuable resource for any professor teaching about global health care.

The text is divided into four parts. Part I contains three chapters and provides an overview of and introduction to health challenges in the United States which provided the impetus and motivation for writing the text. Among the greatest challenges in the U.S. healthcare system is the high cost of care and health disparities. Part I also includes an introduction to the Eight Factor Model, the organizing framework for the discussion of the 11 countries presented in the text. The six countries discussed in Part II of the text are industrialized (developed) countries, and the five countries discussed in Part III are developing countries. Part IV discusses specific challenges and opportunities, such as those devoted to behavioral health care. It also summarizes comparative data by country. Emphasis is placed on what the managers of one system might learn from the managers of the others, conveying that even wealthier, better informed, industrialized (developed) countries can learn from smaller, more vulnerable, developing countries. This section culminates in a discussion about what is required of 21st century leaders in order to transform healthcare systems.

Foreword

Global Health Systems: Comparing Strategies for Delivering Health Services is an excellent text that is timely, comprehensive, and relevant in today's economy when many countries, especially the United States, are concerned about the financing and delivery of health care. Many of the countries are investigating healthcare reform.

It is often stated that if individuals have good health, then they are rich; good health being the norm of being able to work, play, and lead a productive life. How health care is provided to the citizens of the world is determined by the country in which they live. Some countries may be very involved in ensuring their people are recipients of quality health care, while other countries may be less involved. The age-old question of whether the provision of health care is a right or a privilege is one that is difficult to answer, and may have ethical and moral undertones. How a country treats and provides for the health of its citizens may provide a clue as to the moral fiber of its leadership and populace.

Health care is delivered within a system or systems that are often complex, bureaucratized, and difficult for the average consumer to maneuver. The knowledge and understanding of how health care is delivered and paid for should not simply be known to the leaders and the workers within the systems—all citizens of the world should know how health systems work, how they are organized, and how they are funded. This knowledge is essential to recognizing how healthcare dollars are spent and where, and more importantly, to gaining a better understanding of the system and being an informed consumer in such complex systems. In addition, knowledge of healthcare systems may provide a greater understanding of what norms and standards are in practice and also the quality of care that should be provided within the systems.

Global Health Systems: Comparing Strategies for Delivering Health Services is a comprehensive work that will provide the necessary information for scholars, students, and others interested in and concerned about the provision of health care in multiple countries. It is a comprehensive description of how

healthcare systems are organized and delivered. The authors have provided a great service to the readers by compiling this important body of information in one text. The introduction of the Eight Factor Model for evaluating true access is a valuable tool for students and scholars to use in comparing and contrasting countries' healthcare delivery systems. In addition, the model is an excellent tool to use as a framework for researchers interested in studying these systems. This model may help to organize data in a more meaningful and organized way, thereby providing standard data to assist in understanding and guiding decision making.

As a professor who has taught healthcare systems for many years, and who is now approaching the end of my distinguished teaching career, I only wish this book were available during my tenure in the academy.

The authors have provided us with a body of work that is unsurpassed in its comprehensiveness.

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