

Health Attitude: clear thinking about US healthcare, present conditions, and future possibilities

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Book information

Health Attitude: Unraveling and Solving the Complexities of Healthcare by John R. Patrick. 322pp. Attitude LLC, Palm Coast, FL, 2015. ISBN: 069235736X.

Book review

Health Attitude is easily the most comprehensive and comprehensible book on health care in the USA. While technical and political texts abound, when other books look to one or two aspects of health care, John R. Patrick has written an amazing work. It combines aspects of research, scholarly dissertation, current statistics, rigorous analysis, and intensely personal experience. His personal experiences are for me highly compelling, as he talks in an unbiased manner about himself and his family.

Patrick's devotion to his topic is obvious as you read the table of contents. It's meticulous, detailed, and well organized. Some of the topic items are only a couple of paragraphs long, others go for many pages. The short ones are typically self-evident and the longer passages present issues, problems, and solutions. For instance, Patrick has little patience for an industry so wedded to fax and pagers. Far more importantly, he devotes significant space to topics such as patient safety, including hospital-acquired conditions and medical devices. Electronic health records show up several times, and Patrick continually builds the case for their widespread use.

Patrick is balanced on the ins and outs of medical practice, but comes down firmly on the progressive side in sections such as "Healthcare: A Right or a Privilege?" The thread running through the entire book has been about

the potential for inequality, and this is where he brings up the big guns. As he says, "*I advocate the principle, everybody pays something according to their means.*" But no one goes uninsured. He shows that a country may have just one payer or as many as 200, with meaty discussion and deep thinking about this and related funding topics.

Every politician, regardless of party or position, should read this book with I hope, an open mind. This is an important book that can help improve healthcare in the US, whether the reader agrees with Patrick's conclusions or not. Health Attitude is also vital to insurance and corporate executives, as well as physicians, hospital administrators, and concerned citizens.

Acknowledgements

None.

Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: John Patrick and I had business dealings when he was in charge of IBM's ThinkPad line and other responsibilities, and I was editor-in-chief of PC Magazine and subsequent operations. We have not seen one another in roughly 20 years, although we have conversed occasionally. He invited me to review Health Attitude.

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