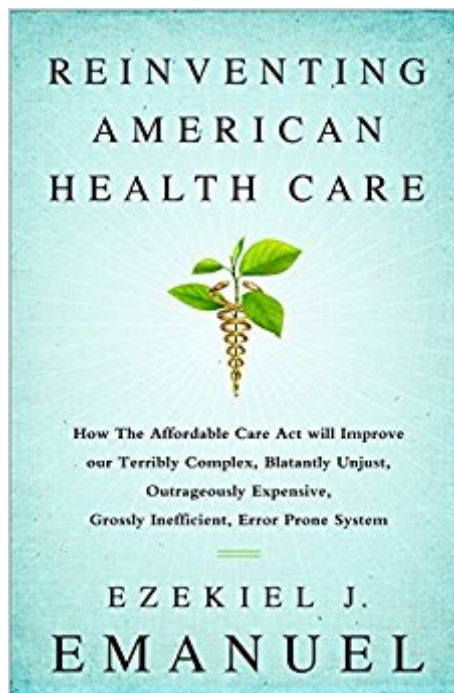


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Reinventing American Health Care: How The Affordable Care Act Will Improve Our Terribly Complex, Blatantly Unjust, Outrageously Expensive, Grossly Inefficient, Error Prone System



Synopsis

The definitive story of American health care today—its causes, consequences, and confusions. In March 2010, the Affordable Care Act was signed into law. It was the most extensive reform of America's health care system since at least the creation of Medicare in 1965, and maybe ever. The ACA was controversial and highly political, and the law faced legal challenges reaching all the way to the Supreme Court; it even precipitated a government shutdown. It was a signature piece of legislation for President Obama's first term, and also a ball and chain for his second. Ezekiel J. Emanuel, a professor of medical ethics and health policy at the University of Pennsylvania who also served as a special adviser to the White House on health care reform, has written a brilliant diagnostic explanation of why health care in America has become such a divisive social issue, how money and medicine have their own—quite distinct—American story, and why reform has bedeviled presidents of the left and right for more than one hundred years. Emanuel also explains exactly how the ACA reforms are reshaping the health care system now. He forecasts the future, identifying six mega trends in health that will determine the market for health care to 2020 and beyond. His predictions are bold, provocative, and uniquely well-informed. Health care—one of America's largest employment sectors, with an economy the size of the GDP of France—has never had a more comprehensive or authoritative interpreter.

Book Information

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: PublicAffairs; Reprint edition (March 3, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1610395425

ISBN-13: 978-1610395427

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 113 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #22,228 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure > Government & Business #18 in Books > Medical Books > Administration & Medicine Economics > Health Policy #72 in Books > Medical Books > Administration & Medicine Economics > Health Care Delivery

Customer Reviews

In this unabashedly pro-Obama-care book, prominent bioethicist Emanuel makes a convincing,

albeit one-sided, case for overhauling what he sees as an unfair health system in the U.S. Deftly using numbers to make his arguments, Emanuel organizes his book into three parts: the current system (largely its financing), health-care reform (the nearly 1,000-page Affordable Care Act ACA and legal challenges to it), and the future (lots of hospital closings). Today more money goes to the 4,985 acute-care hospitals (\$970 billion in 2012) than all of Social Security (\$730 billion) or national defense (\$650 billion). And before ACA, nearly 50 million Americans, including 12 million undocumented aliens, lacked insurance. He also touches on important history (the creation of Medicare in 1965) and clearly explains complicated issues. For example, he uses a menu-pricing analogy to explain bundled payments: a self fee-for-service is ordering à la carte, bundled payment is prix fixe. • A plain-English explanation of a tricky topic. --Karen Springen --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

• With this book, Zeke Emanuel has done the country an immense service. He does the impossible—explain the dysfunctional American health care system—and then takes it one better. For here he also makes the hard-eyed case for understanding that the passage of health reform—of Obamacare—has set us on a path for a health system that works. Our system has left millions without needed care, bankrupt, or both, and tied the fate of their health to where they work. This book explains how we got in this fix, how we will get out of it—and even more boldly, when. If you wanted to read one book to understand health care, this is the one you want. •

• Atul Gawande, surgeon, staff writer for The New Yorker, and author of The Checklist Manifesto

• There are thoughtful doctors, savvy policy makers and profound scholars of morality. Zeke Emanuel is the only person in America who is all three. That makes him the right person to write the definitive primer on health care in America. It should be read by anyone who wants to understand what may be the most important set of domestic issues facing America. •

• Lawrence H. Summers, former Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, & President Emeritus and Charles W. Eliot University Professor of Harvard University

• Prominent bioethicist Emanuel makes a convincing, albeit onesided, case for overhauling what he sees as an unfair health system in the U.S. Deftly using numbers to make his arguments, Emanuel organizes his book into three parts: the current system (largely its financing), health-care reform (the nearly 1,000-page Affordable Care Act [ACA] and legal challenges to it), and the future (lots of hospital closings) • He also touches on important history (the creation of Medicare in 1965) and clearly explains complicated issues • A plain-English explanation of a tricky topic. •

• Booklist

• Few people have had a more favorable influence on the shaping of

the current processes of health care reform than Zeke Emanuel has. And no one is a better, clearer, or wiser interpreter of the insanely complex non-system that we are trying to fix. This book is an instant classic—mandatory reading for anyone who wants to know how we got where we are in American health care and where we need to go. • —Donald M. Berwick, MD, MPP, president emeritus and senior fellow at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, and former administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—Infused with diagrams, charts, and tables, this book is informative, thought-provoking, and immensely important. Given his role in the program, and as is reflected in the subtitle of the book, Emanuel clearly wants to persuade, but he also wants to explain. And because he was an insider — and proves himself a gifted writer — he makes an able guide to the complexities of the landmark legislation— Clearly, if Obamacare is to fulfill its promise there will need to be significant changes and that will require collaboration among citizens, health care professionals, scholars, and lawmakers from across the political spectrum. And the only way this can happen is if people understand what exactly is at stake. —Reinventing American Health Care— spells this out clearly, and by doing so, lays the foundation for this kind of collaboration to occur. • —Dennis Rosen, Boston Globe—For Americans poisoned by nefarious medical insurance companies and a G.O.P. dying to gut Obamacare, I prescribe Ezekiel Emanuel's Reinventing American Health Care (PublicAffairs) to clarify how the Affordable Care Act can rehabilitate our nauseatingly unjust, grossly expensive, and senselessly complicated health-care system. My personal recommendation? Lay off the toxic propaganda. • —Vanity Fair—Whether you agree with his conclusions or not, they're well argued, and he has marshaled an impressive amount of information. • —Washington Post—Zeke Emanuel has written a book that tells people interested health care policy what they need to know but all too often do not. He brings together a staggering variety of information, never before available in one place, on economics, medicine, legislative history, governmental operations, politics, and the gory, boring, and surpassingly important issue of implementation. No single book can tell one all one needs to know about the most complex health care system in the world, but this one comes very close indeed. • —Henry J. Aaron, the Bruce and Virginia MacLaury Senior Fellow in the Economic Studies program at the Brookings Institution—The author, who serves as a special White House adviser on health care reform, is optimistic that its glitches will be resolved within the year and that it will transform how patients are cared for over the coming decades—He offers an insider's account of some of the infighting that occurred within the Obama administration—The author takes a long view of the reforms beginning with incentives and penalties for the adoption of uniform electronic health records in the 2009 Recovery

Act…An important challenge to the naysayers on both sides of the political divide.â •–Kirkus Reviews

Ezekiel Emanuel has written a very interesting book about the U.S. health care system. In the introduction, he tries to make sense of how three individuals were affected by this system. He then proceeds to get into the nitty-gritty of the American health care system beginning with its roots. The book is divided into three parts. In Part I we review the history of the American health care system, in Part II we explore the efforts to reform the system, and finally, in part III, we gaze into the crystal ball of the future. In the first part, he provides us with a brief history of healthcare in the U.S. It was interesting to learn how the employer-based system came to predominate in society. In the rest of the section we get a very detailed description of how healthcare is financed, who the providers are, how Americans get their healthcare, and interestingly, how this all works together to give us our current healthcare system. We are provided with many tables, charts, and diagrams, which provide some interesting statistics. In part two Emanuel discusses the history of health care reform. He first covers the history of health care from Teddy Roosevelt, to Franklin Roosevelt, to Truman, to Lyndon Johnson, and on to Clinton. Truman was a strong advocate for national health care but was stopped by the first Republican controlled Congress since 1932. Johnson did manage to introduce Medicare and Medicaid laws, and most can remember what happened to Clinton's proposal. Interestingly in 1971, there were 22 separate health insurance bills before Congress. Not one made it out of committee. We clearly see the difficult road that was followed to achieve some sort of national health care. Emanuel continues on to explain to us the details of the enactment of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the immediate challenges to the law. Just minutes after being signed into law, over 20 states filed a lawsuit challenging its constitutionality. This was to be followed by an incessant barrage of lawsuits over the ensuing years, some of which the Supreme Court had to decide. In Chapter eight, we get some very detailed information about exactly what is in the ACA. This is a very valuable chapter; it contains a wealth of information on the inner workings of the ACA. Many tables and charts are presented to explain to us exactly what this law does. It would behoove anyone interested in healthcare in America to read this over and learn the wealth of benefits provided by the law. Most people have no idea of all the things provided for by the law that ensures affordable healthcare, and it manages to (after ten years) be revenue positive, according to the Congressional Budget Office. In addition to access, according to Emanuel, "The ACA also addresses cost, quality, prevention and health promotion, health care workforce issues, and many other matters." In a following chapter, the author shows us what the ACA means to us, before

delving into Part III, where he discusses the future of health care in America. We are introduced to various "dashboards" that cover coverage, cost-control, quality, and overall health status. The author also discusses various reforms that build on the ACA to advance health promotion and prevention, cost control, and quality improvement that he says are "shovel ready." In the final chapter, we are informed of the long-term impact of the ACA. It is the author's belief we will eventually see the demise of insurance companies as we know them, and even the end of employer-sponsored health insurance. We will see more accountable care organizations (networks of physicians, hospitals and other providers). He also discusses four other trends. I recommend that anyone desiring an understanding of our American health care system read this book. It is as the author says, "in the longer sweep of history, beginning in 2020 or so, the ACA will increasingly be seen as a world historical achievement, even more important for the United States than Social Security and Medicare has been." I think you will share this conclusion after reading this book.

This is truly a really good book that has a lot of depth to it. There are so many laws that are cited and what the ramifications are of each of them. It is really a good read that keeps you interested throughout the book. If I have to select a negative remark, it would have to be that the book is dated. The author tell us what will (or supposed to) happen in 2014, 2015... Some of it became true and other items did not make it but do not let that hold you back from reading this book. I purchased the audio companion version and it is read by the author. To close, I would pair this book with Remedy and Reaction by Paul Starr.

This is a well-written and well-organized book with interesting information. The beginning part of the book starts out with the history of medical care and attempts at medical reform in the history of the United States. It points out that as many as 98,000 people die in hospitals each year as a result of preventable medical errors. The book also points out the following information: Half the American population hardly uses any services. 10% of Americans use nearly 2/3rds of all health care services. The mandate reduces adverse selection. 55% of those earning less than 100% of the Federal Poverty line were not offered Health Insurance from their employers. 51% of the uninsured have been uninsured for three years or more. Of course, these figures are as of the end of last year before the Affordable Care Act went into effect. Before ACA went into effect, at least 15% Americans were uninsured. One out of 7 Americans lacked health insurance in the richest country of the world. Not having health insurance can cost you your life. Being uninsured means your chance

of dying in a car accident is 40% higher than that of a privately insured person. The author of the book feels that the mandate is the only way insurance companies can offer to all-including those with pre-existing conditions. The mandate is to balance the sick and the healthy. The drawback of this book is that it does not mention the fact that in California for Medi-Cal as of the present time this review is written, the Government can seek recovery (reimbursement) from the estate of anyone 55 or over who died for all health insurance premiums that were paid into it. Some people feel that this is unjust because it allows people with higher income levels to get subsidized health insurance through the new health insurance exchange and not have to pay back any of it. There is a bill that could be signed or vetoed by California Governor Brown by the end of September 2014 that could still retain this or change it. Some people feel that it is Orwellian to have to choose between having health protection and your estate.

I'm a Brit living in the US. I'm used to the UK National Heath Service which offers great healthcare outcomes and reasonable value for taxpayers' money. Arriving in the US I find myself completely confused by a complex, bureaucratic, expensive private healthcare insurance system. Emanuel's book offered a comprehensive and insightful history of the US healthcare system and explained all the complexities of co-insurance and co-pays. The main topic, of course, was the Affordable Care Act and how it came to pass, what it set out of delivered and the compromises along the way. Emanuel was an architect of the ACA and his principles and pride shine through his writing, but that doesn't stop him pulling his punches when criticizing the Act's failings. An enlightening read.

This book is a pro PPACA book. If you are against the PPACA and want to get into the minds of those who are pro PPACA this book will help with that. However, it does paint a picture that makes the PPACA look much better than it actually is.

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