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# BOOK REVIEWS

## JONAS AND KOVNER'S HEALTH CARE DELIVERY IN THE UNITED STATES, 11TH EDITION

ZACHARY PRUITT, PhD

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The 11th edition of *Jonas and Kovner's Health Care Delivery in the United States* (Knickman & Kovner, 2015) arrives at perhaps the most transformative time in the textbook's 40-year history. Expertly edited by James R. Knickman and Anthony R. Kovner, these longtime scholars assemble an esteemed collection of authors who explain the evolution of public health and medical care in the United States. After a long history of medical intervention expansion, recent policy developments attempt to rebalance our national health system toward health promotion and disease prevention. This text delivers meaningful context to graduate and advanced undergraduate students of healthcare administration and public health on the efforts to reshape our health system.

### *Structure*

Each of the 16 chapters potentially stand alone in value to the reader, but together they integrate public health and medical care delivery topics effectively. The first section of the text provides an overview of healthcare delivery and compares our policy approaches to other nations. The next four chapters outline the efforts to keep Americans healthy throughout their lives. The final part of the book describes the medical care delivery system. A strength of the text is how the sequence of chapters illustrate the challenge of diffusing public health innovations into an established medical intervention system through financing reform, technology enhancements, organizational redesign, and the ambition for improved value for entire population.

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Please address correspondence to: Zachary Pruitt, University of South Florida, Health Policy and Management, 13201 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC56, Litha, FL 33612-3805, Email: [zacpruitt@yahoo.com](mailto:zacpruitt@yahoo.com), Phone: (727) 560-9735.

### *Content*

True of any text attempting to cover a breadth of topics by many different authors, chapters often cover content repeatedly. For example, capitation is discussed without definition in chapter 4 and then defined in detail in chapter 11. For all but the advanced student, issues such as this make the material difficult to follow. At other times, repeated definition of terms, such as pay-for-performance, may annoy the more knowledgeable reader.

Nevertheless, the text features many elements that improve accessibility for students, professors, and practitioners alike. New to this edition are impressive infographics that charmingly illustrate key concepts such as the rise in obesity, the association of health spending and life expectancy, and the 10 essential public health services. In fact, the editors devote the entire second chapter to the engaging visual overview of U.S. healthcare. Additionally, the glossary of terms and the appendix containing major ACA provisions will be helpful as a desk reference for years to come.

### *Audience*

For those instructors adopting it as a new text for their course, teaching resources will enable efficient course development. Tools include an instructor's manual, image bank, Power Point slides, exam questions, and a sample syllabus. Furthermore, the book's structure supports courses that may focus on public health concepts, including chapters on population health, public health transformation, health behaviors, and vulnerable populations. Alternatively, the text would enhance any interdisciplinary health education curricula with selected chapters on the organization of care, the health workforce, healthcare financing, and managing and governing healthcare organizations.

If previous editions did not meet the needs for a particular course, certain additions may compel the adoption now. Since the last edition, timely case study activities have been added on topics such as Accountable Care Organizations, Affordable Care Act implementation, and patient-centered medical homes. Also, chapters on health information technology, public health, and healthcare cost and value are improved.

For those looking to transition to the new edition, these enhancements may compel earlier implementation, but some challenges will need to be overcome. The elimination of the chapters on comparative effectiveness and integrative models and performance seem justifiable, but removing the chapter on access to care may be problematic. Many instructors reference the venerable "iron triangle of healthcare" (Kissick, 1994), and while full chapters on quality and cost containment are included, this text removed the third side of the triangle:

access to care. Nonetheless, while not explicitly referenced as “access,” key concepts such as underinsurance, safety-net providers, and vulnerable populations are incorporated in the text.

### *Theme*

Perhaps the updated way to frame the public health and healthcare delivery conversation is through the “Triple Aim” paradigm. Described as the “concurrent pursuit of three objectives to improve the U.S. healthcare system,” the book integrates topics supporting each of the goals: improving patients’ healthcare experience, improving health outcomes, and reducing healthcare costs. Within the context our shortcomings, experts in various domains present innovations to achieve these aims. For example, Carolyn M. Clancy and Irene Fraser relate how reorganized care delivery and improved incentives may enhance the patient experience. Also, Nivav R. Shah demonstrates how health information technology can improve patient outcomes. Finally, Thad Calabrese and Keith F. Safian skillfully describe some main drivers of expenditure growth and policies designed to increase value.

### *Future*

The closing chapter reflects on the current period, with its decreasing expenditure growth and expanding insurance coverage, and looks to the future of healthcare delivery and policy. Throughout the text, each author communicates how and why the Affordable Care Act demands that the U.S. healthcare system transform to achieve more preventive care, better value, and higher quality. Whatever comes to pass until the release of the next edition, this text will certainly poise future healthcare leaders to steady themselves for the rapidly changing healthcare environment.

## REFERENCES

- Kissick, W. (1994). *Medicine’s dilemmas: Infinite needs versus finite resources*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Knickman, J. R., & Kovner, A. R. (2015). *Jonas and Kovner’s health care delivery in the United States* (11th ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

# TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT CAREER: 50 LESSONS THAT DRIVE SUCCESS

ROSEMARY M. CARON, PhD

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Healthcare is an ever-changing system and the Affordable Care Act has assured a reformation of the system we both manage and often seek care within. Although many have questioned whether our healthcare system is one that cares for our health at all, it is comprised of numerous care giving organizations whose mission is focused on providing accessible, quality care in a more efficient and safe manner and at a reduced cost. In order to achieve this mission, we need healthcare professionals who are not only academically prepared, but who can lead in an equitable, altruistic fashion while making the difficult decisions. *Take Charge of Your Healthcare Management Career: 50 Lessons that Drive Success* (White & Lindsey, 2015) is a recent book that eloquently describes the “traits, lessons, and skills” which “must be mastered for maximum personal, career, and work success” in order to be an effective manager in today’s healthcare system.

Institutions such as the American College of Healthcare Executives, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, and the Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Management have determined that healthcare managers should be competent in specific knowledge areas and the application of relevant skills in order to lead a healthcare system and its constituents, and to safely and effectively treat patients. The authors, currently an endowed Professor of Nursing and Associate Dean for Strategic Partnerships and Innovation in the School of Nursing at the University of Virginia, and a Principal with Ivy Ventures, LLC, a healthcare company, complement the required healthcare competencies by providing focus on the skills necessary for today’s entry- to mid-level career professional, as well as senior healthcare administrators to achieve and sustain success in their chosen profession. Together, these authors boast remarkable, enduring, successful careers in healthcare management

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Please address correspondence to: Rosemary M. Caron, PhD, MPH, University of New Hampshire, College of Health and Human Services, Department of Health Management and Policy, #319 Hewitt Hall, 4 Library Way, Durham, New Hampshire 03824, Email: [Rosemary.Caron@unh.edu](mailto:Rosemary.Caron@unh.edu), Phone: (603) 862-3653.

education. The practices and the lessons conveyed are sincere, practical, and applicable in today's dynamic healthcare setting.

The book is well written and is organized into three parts, with 18 chapters in the introductory section that emphasize the importance of managing oneself. The authors state, "If you can't manage yourself, you can't tackle all the things that come next." There are 18 chapters on managing your job and 14 chapters on taking charge of your career. The chapters are concise, each beginning with a quote from a leader in the healthcare system. Bullet points are utilized to emphasize specific lessons. Each chapter ends with one or two exercises that are self-reflective, with the goal of having the reader not only be their best self in the workplace, but also to encourage that they consider the infrastructure and operation of their healthcare organization. For example, the questions are oriented toward self-improvement activities, such as making lists of priorities for oneself and monitoring progress in achieving those goals over a period of time; encouraging joining professional networks; rating oneself on the ability to engage and motivate a team; and not only identifying strengths and weaknesses, but developing a plan to convert weaknesses into strengths. Lastly, each chapter lists useful resources specific to each lesson.

The authors rely on their personal and professional experiences to develop lessons that are timeless for anyone entering the healthcare profession. The authors address, in a comprehensive manner, the lessons anyone in the profession needs to know if they are just starting out. These lessons also serve as a reminder for seasoned professionals. The authors discuss, for example, the significance of professional written and oral communication; dressing for the professional work environment; the importance of making a difference in the early days of a new job; appreciating and leveraging differences; the significance of listening well; being a team player; how to make oneself stand out in a positive light; how to interview and handle disappointment; the value of balancing work and life; and how to find one's next job. The authors' efforts in addressing these topics contribute to helping the reader understand how the often perceived "little things" matter, such as the personal touch of writing thank-you notes, letting others speak without interruption, and volunteering to do a job outside of one's comfort zone. These examples are often the soft skills referenced in the professional work environment that can be difficult to teach in the traditional classroom. Those working in healthcare administration and (I would add) even the business sector can relate to the lessons identified by the authors as driving success.

The authors speak to, in the first and third section of the book, the importance of being mindful in one's work and personal life. This is an important theme in today's healthcare environment with perceived unrealistic work

demands that require results in minimal time. This lesson encourages the reader to know thyself and to not only take care of oneself when they need to but to also be mindful of those one works with in order to better understand an issue from another's perspective.

*Take Charge of Your Healthcare Management Career: 50 Lessons that Drive Success* imparts lifelong lessons for a number of audiences working in the healthcare field, including the early- mid- and senior professional. The book is comprehensive on the topic and the lessons are experience-driven. The theme of each chapter is threaded consistently throughout the book as the reader prepares for or reflects on their healthcare career. Overall, *Take Charge of Your Healthcare Management Career: 50 Lessons that Drive Success* is a well-written, concise book that should be required reading for the student and practitioner of healthcare management.

## REFERENCES

White, K. R., & Lindsey, J. S. (2015). *Take charge of your healthcare management career: 50 Lessons that drive success*. Chicago, IL: Health Press Administration.