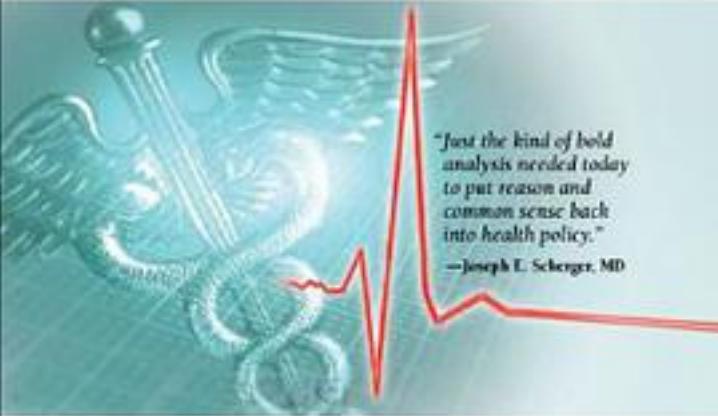


RX for Health Care Reform

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"Just the kind of bold analysis needed today to put reason and common sense back into health policy."
—Joseph E. Scherzer, MD

Ken Terry

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In this readable and well-researched book, Ken Terry analyzes the current state of health care reform and finds it wanting. Instead of tackling the core problems in our failing system, he argues, politicians, insurance executives, and health care leaders have embraced ideologically driven initiatives that pursue impractical objectives or will take too long to bear fruit. Among these are such widely hailed trends as disease management, pay for performance, cost and price transparency, consumer-directed care, and health information technology, none of which will reverse the rising tide of health spending. What is creating this nightmare scenario, according to Terry, is the sheer profitability of the health care industry. Insurers, physicians, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and device manufacturers are all striving to maximize their profits, and there is no effective competition or regulation to restrain them. Only a complete overhaul of our system for financing and delivering health care can get us out of this mess, the author maintains. In the second half of his book, he presents a bold vision of how to do this: First, he says, all primary care physicians should join group practices that are large enough to take financial responsibility for professional services. And second, competition among those physician groups, based on cost and quality, should replace competition among health plans. There should be only one government-regulated insurer per region, he says, and it should have no role in managing care.

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