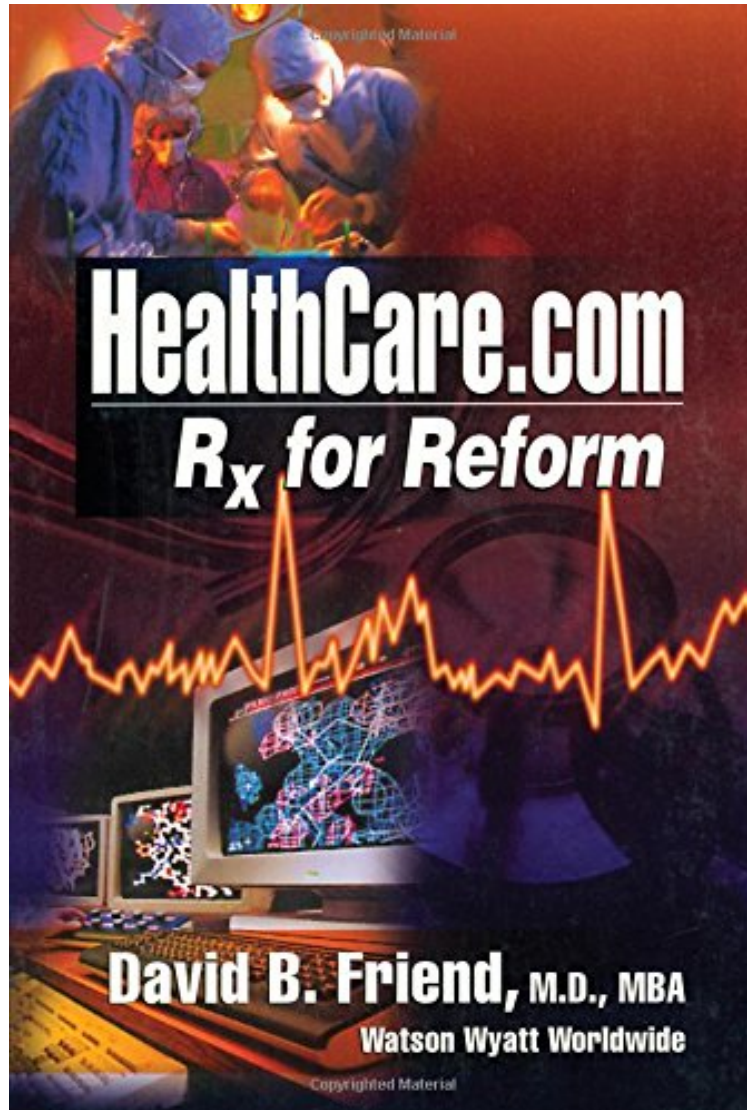


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## Healthcare.com: Rx for Reform

*Friend David*

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**Friend David : Healthcare.com: Rx for Reform** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Healthcare.com: Rx for Reform:

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. A Roadmap to Healthcare in the 21st Century By An MD Healthcare in the United States has become schizophrenic: there is a disconnect between consumers (who want the best possible care, right away) and those paying for insurance coverage (faced with staggering increases in cost). Because of his background in both medicine and business (he has both MD and MBA degrees), Doctor David Friend understands healthcare from both of these perspectives. "Healthcare.com" describes, in nontechnical terms, how we've

gotten into the current untenable situation, why it must change, and how technology and the internet may "save the day." In the 1960's, when costs were relatively low and insurance paid for everything, the laws of supply and demand resulted in what Doctor Friend terms "Wastecare," using a "sledgehammer when a flyswatter would do." In the late 80's and early 90's, as costs began to skyrocket, payers began to cut back. Insisting on getting more for their money, they pressured hospitals and doctors to provide "Hollowcare" which was the "driving force that sent patients home from hospitals before they were ready." Ultimately, Doctor Friend believes we need to achieve "Efficientcare" where costs are minimized not by reducing services but rather by increasing productivity. This can be achieved, by streamlining the processes of data acquisition, and implementation of treatments, giving physicians more time to synthesize information and deal with patients. It is here that the internet plays a key role by decreasing the constraints of time and space: Rather than being constrained to a paper chart, patient data become readily available from any computer on the planet, while X-rays taken in Atlanta can now be interpreted instantaneously in Anchorage or Antwerp. This book is an excellent roadmap and should be required reading for corporate benefits officers and public officials who are involved in making health care policy decisions (for their companies or for recipients of Medicare / Medicaid). It is also a must-read for health care consumers and providers who will ultimately be affected by the inevitable changes in healthcare delivery.

Despite more than a decade of change, the U.S. health care delivery system is still in the early stages of its transformation into a truly effective, cost efficient and compassionate system. In *Healthcare.com: RX for Reform*, Dr. David Friend, trained in both medicine and business, delineates the symptoms of our ailing healthcare system and offers a vision for the future. Even with the enormous turmoil our health care system has undergone - from the proliferation of managed care to the closing of hospitals - large numbers of people continue to receive sub-optimal care. The author discusses several symptoms including: increasing costs, uncertain quality of care, eroding trust in health care vendors, increasing prospect of shareholder liability, declining access to providers, unclear impact on employee productivity. It is time to discard the old, traditional way of thinking about healthcare and take a fresh look at its issues and challenges. To tackle these challenges we must strike a balance between the seemingly dissimilar disciplines of economics, medicine, technology, and politics. Dr. Friend proposes that we tear down the brick and mortar delivery model and replace it with a Virtual Health Care System. This new model changes the roles of everyone involved in the healthcare system, from the patient to the healthcare provider. It utilizes technology to redesign health care so that it can be delivered with higher quality and greater efficiency. *Healthcare.com: RX for Reform* examines the actions necessary for the evolution of our current system into a Virtual Health Care System. Features