

Chapter 1

An Enhanced Healthcare Delivery System Model for the US: Adaptation of Principles From the “Best”

Raj Selladurai

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4126-4160>
Indiana University Northwest, USA

Roshini Isabell Selladurai

*In His Image Family Medicine Residency, Ascension St. John Medical Center,
USA*

ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on developing an enhanced US healthcare delivery system model by learning from the “best” healthcare systems in the world and adapting some of their best working principles to the existing US healthcare system. These global systems include the Swiss healthcare system, which is considered one of the best in the world, and some of the other leading healthcare systems such as the German, the UK, French, Italian, and Singaporean. It would also explore, among a few alternatives, the state innovation-based approach to healthcare reform. Major concerns such as cost containment, affordability, flexibility, accessibility, feasibility, and implementation-related issues have been addressed.

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INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is to develop an enhanced US healthcare delivery system model by learning from some of the other “best” healthcare systems in the world, including Switzerland, Germany, the UK, France, Italy, and Singapore, and adapting some of their best working principles toward the enhanced US healthcare delivery system model. The objectives include to present a background, based on a review of the literature, some of the powerful features of the best healthcare systems in the world, and then to develop an enhanced healthcare system model for the US by adopting and adapting these best principles to the US healthcare system model. Also, the chapter would evaluate the enhanced hybrid healthcare model and other related models in terms of outcomes such as cost containment, affordability, flexibility, accessibility, feasibility, and implementation issues.

BACKGROUND

Healthcare reform involves challenges and complexities due to the very nature of the subject – that all people have access to and receive useful, reasonable quality healthcare, which is an essential part of human life. Further, especially as one gets older, healthcare becomes more of a critical necessity for a good quality of life. Questions such as do we use public or private insurance plans, employer-provided plans, or some other group or organizational provided plans have to be addressed. Is healthcare a federally administered program, or should it be handled and managed at the state levels by each state, respectively? What about people who may not be employed or those who are self-employed, or those who may not be offered or are ineligible for healthcare from their employer/s?

And why did/does the US need healthcare reform in the first place? The current healthcare system in the US is one of the largest and the best in the world (America Next, 2014). It is considered to be the source for several amazing innovations, especially in the medical fields, and provides the best, high-quality care for those who need it at the right time. The US has some of the best physicians, nurses, researchers, and healthcare provider systems in the world. People from all over the world, including leaders and influential people, when needing critical lifesaving treatments, services, and surgeries, come to the US. “It is here, in America, where treatments are discovered, methods are improved, and diseases are cured” (America Next, 2014, p. 3).

However, despite having the best healthcare system in the world, the US still has to address and manage several continuing problems, complexities, high costs, universal access, universal coverage, and other related issues. Before the passage

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