

Rebuilding Trust in Healthcare: A Doctor's Prescription for a Post-Pandemic America

Paul Pender

Early Arrival Press (Sep 20, 2020)

Softcover \$25.00 (172pp)

978-0-578-75596-0

Rebuilding Trust in Healthcare argues that COVID-19 exposed dangerous flaws in the way America delivers its health care.

Paul Pender's analytical *Rebuilding Trust in Healthcare* suggests ways to improve America's health care system.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a reminder that the US's health care system does not work for everyone. Pender acknowledges that problems existed long before the pandemic began, but also warns that they will remain long after the pandemic ends—unless corrective steps are taken soon. This book contends that the dominant issue with the system is the lack of trust that it encourages between patients and the systems meant to care for them, but also that providers can take steps to strengthen that trust.

The book is arranged like a doctor's report. It begins by identifying the problem—distrust—and then moves into an exploration of its causes, effects, and potential solutions. It covers pre-pandemic health care issues, including racial disparities, governmental wheeling and dealing, and regulatory interference between patients and their doctors. Its examples draw upon Pender's forty years of professional experience to demonstrate how building and maintaining trust improves patients' experiences.

Here, lack of trust is said to affect both patients and doctors. The book asserts that medical professionals are hamstrung by interference from the government and insurance companies, and that patients cannot trust physicians because of those same regulations and restrictions. Meaningful reform, it argues, must confront these realities in total.

The book's language is straightforward and concise, making this an accessible introduction to the topic. Though it is brief, the book's concerns are broad, touching on multiple factors that affect trust in health care, both for good and for ill. Some issues are skimmed over in the process, including the argument that Americans would not benefit from socialized medicine. The book's bibliography and list of references will be of use to those seeking deeper understanding of the subject matter.

This perspective-driven book is an intriguing and thoughtful response to the health care crisis that recognizes that everyone is a patient at some point in their lives. Pender argues as both a doctor and a patient, observing and critiquing American health care in a credible manner. Centering the book in its moment, this work concludes in the now familiar manner of a mock Zoom call between fictional experts who summarize and expand upon the book's main points, keeping them organized and clear.

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EILEEN GONZALEZ (November 24, 2020)

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