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Refocusing health care systems on a new definition of health and on the geneva convention promises to reduce costs

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Over the past decade's healthcare systems (HCS) have continuously become more and more expensive worldwide thereby requiring ever larger fractions of the gross domestic product. So far, all cost-reducing measures have failed. This may be explained by the fact, that HCS should be considered as complex adaptive systems (CAS) which do not respond as expected to external manipulations. Such systems are energized bottom-up from the inside by their core focus, that includes their purpose, goals, and values. Reduction of health care costs, therefore, requires a reconsideration of their core focus. This primarily involves the many discretionary decisions occurring in the doctor-patient relationship. They are characterized by a large leeway and therefore at all levels are subject to various sorts of incentives and nudging. This explains a large fraction of the rise in costs. Consequently, in the era of neoliberalism HCS have many reasons to become more and more expensive and to strongly resist influences by economists. The only way to reform HCS is by truly refocusing their driving energy on their in-tended core focus. The central mission of HCS is to improve the health of patients. Yet, so far nobody could say what health truly is. This obstacle has now been overcome by the recent definition of health called Meikirch model. Values in HCS, e.g. the Hippocratic oath, have been reformed by the World Medical Association and expressed in November 2017 as Geneva convention. Thus, in line with complexity thinking HCS may now be reoriented and reorganized on their core focus, the Meikirch model, and the Geneva convention. This promises to lower health care costs while simultaneously improving the health of the patients.

Biography

Johannes Bircher MD was born in 1933, studied in Zurich, was trained at the Mayo Clinic, and the University of Zurich, worked at the Universities of Bern, Addis Ababa, Göttingen and Witten/Herdecke (both Germany). He authored more than 200 papers in scientific journals and wrote and edited 5 books. His main subjects were liver disease and clinical pharmacology. In the past five years, he was concerned mainly with the definition of health, the Meikirch model.

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