

Book Reviews

Really Governing: How Health System and Hospital Boards Can Make More of a Difference

Dennis D. Pointer and Charles M. Ewell

Delmar Publishers, Albany, NY, 1994, 266 pp., \$42.95

IN THIS PERIOD OF RADICAL, FUNDAMENTAL change, healthcare leaders are reexamining everything to see if their approach is right for the new times. The roles and responsibilities at the leadership level of our organizations perhaps need to be reviewed as well. How can management

and trustees work together most efficiently? How does the organization need to relate to a new parent or network?

Really Governing by Dennis D. Pointer and Charles M. Ewell can help leaders find appropriate answers to these old questions. The authors bring many years of practical experience working on the issue of governance and clearly present their insights along with approaches readers can apply to their own situations.

The book's content ranges from theoretical concepts, such as the board's ultimate responsibilities and core roles, to practical applications, such as sample documents on assessment and conflicts of interest. The authors' approach recognizes the board's evolving role from a caretaker to the leadership role organizations need today.

Pointer and Ewell identify five areas of

ultimate responsibility and three core roles for the board. The five areas of responsibility are vision, mission, and goals; quality of care; executive performance; organizational financial health; and board performance. The three core roles are policy formulation, decision making, and oversight. The five responsibilities and the three roles form a matrix of 15 squares, and the book describes how, within each of these, relationships between the board and management can be decided. It shows ways for the board to delegate to management while maintaining its ultimate responsibility.

Clearly written and comprehensive, this book would serve every hospital and system as an excellent resource for both CEO and trustee.

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BOOK BRIEFS

Managing Health Promotion: Developing Healthy Organizations And Communities

Ina Simnett, John Wiley & Sons,
Chichester, England, 1995, 247 pp.,
\$28.95 (paperback)

Training consultant and health educator Ina Simnett has parlayed her experience as a senior research fellow at Keele University and the National Health Service into a new book on transitioning from an illness-based healthcare model to a health promotion model. The book emphasizes how to create organizations and alliances that enhance health and quality of life, as well as the role of individual responsibility and caring for hard-to-reach groups.

The Politics of Health Legislation: An Economic Perspective, ed. 2

Paul J. Feldstein, Health Administration Press, Chicago, 1996, 320 pp., \$36 (paperback)

This book for students of health policy and economics presents the economic impact of healthcare legislation. Paul Feldstein, a professor at the Graduate School of Management, University of California, Irvine, sets out to demonstrate that legislative and regulatory outcomes in healthcare arise from individuals, groups, and legislators acting in their own self-interest. This updated edition includes discussion of proposed Medicare and Medicaid changes, deregulation and market competition, and healthcare reform.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Making Sense of Advance Directives, revised edition, Nancy M. P. King, Georgetown University Press, Washington, DC, 1996

Phantom Illness: Shattering the Myth of Hypochondria, Carla Cantor with Brian A. Fallon, Houghton Mifflin, New York City, 1996

Radical Surgery: What's Next for America's Health Care

Joseph A. Califano, Jr.

Times Books, New York City, 1995, 316 pp., \$24.50

MOST OF US REMEMBER JOSEPH CALIFANO, former secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) in the Carter administration, railing against rising healthcare costs, creating the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), and publicly confronting the tobacco industry. He is also known to many for his part in the development of Medicare and Medicaid and for his active support of private industry's efforts to contain healthcare costs. He attempts to establish his credentials as a worthy critic of healthcare based on more than 30 years' experience in "wrestling with America's health care