



Home Care: Current Problems and Future Solutions

Warren Balinsky

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In this timely book, Warren Balinsky shows how to increase access to home health care while simultaneously controlling costs and maintaining quality. He offers an insightful overview on how the home care health industry has evolved. And he reveals why home care has become the preferred form of treatment for many patients and caregivers and analyzes the specific patient populations for which it is most appropriate. In addition to the obvious benefits to the patient - increased comfort and security, greater privacy and autonomy, more control of activities and decisions, greater confidentiality, and reduced risk of catching nosocomial infection - the author's research bears out that home care can be less expensive for targeted patient populations. Balinsky argues that home care can be the most cost-effective for populations such as technologically assisted pediatric, elderly, and AIDS patients - the very patients who are the most costly to care for in an institutional setting and who can derive the greatest benefit and represent the largest cost savings when cared for at home. He shows how home care is better able to handle the medical, health, and social welfare needs of these patient populations. Using examples of successful models - shared aide, hospice, and long-term home health care the author provides suggestions for improving the cost-effectiveness of home and community based care. Some of the recommendations include targeting services to those with the most severe disabilities, prioritizing institution diversion strategies, investigating the utility of technological advances, and employing case management with home care services tied to a fiscal cap. Warren Balinsky is associateprofessor at the Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy of the New School for Social Research in New York City.



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