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IMPACT ON HEALTH ECONOMY OF A NEW THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF HEALTH: THE MEIKIRCH MODEL

Costs of health care have become a growing and potentially dangerous burden to the society. Yet, so far health economy (HE) has not been able to relieve the situation. We invite health economists to give considerations to a new look at the nature of health described by the Mei-kirch model (MM) and to explore its possible benefits for HE. The Mm states: "Health is a dynamic state of wellbeing emergent from conductive interactions between individuals' po-tentials, life's demands, and social and environmental determinants. Throughout the life course health results when an individuals' biologically given potential (BGP) and his or her personally acquired potential (PAP), interacting with social and environmental determinants, satisfactorily respond to the demands of life." The PAP of each individual is the most modifi-able component of the model. It responds positively to constructive social interactions and to personal growth. It is the site of personal responsibility. The rising costs of health care pre-sumably are due in part to the tragedy of the commons, to Moral Hazard of patients and of physicians, to managers and to other factors. Only a new culture of health will bring costs down to a satisfactory level. This encompasses innovations in personal health leadership and renegotiations of relationships at all social levels. Thereby equal weight is to be given to the MM, to HE, and to normative considerations. Refocusing of the health care system on the Mm may relieve the society from damages related to a destructive financial burden.

Biography

Johannes Bircher has completed his professional formation at the University of Zurich, and his postgraduate education at the Mayo Clinic and the University of Zurich. Then he worked at the Department of Clinical Pharmacology of the University of Bern, at the Black Lion Hospital in Addis Ababa and at the University of Gottingen before he became dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Witten/Herdecke. Now he is retired. He published 253 papers partly in high ranking scientific journals, and seven books.

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