

**Using the internet to practice
medicine: Increasing efficiency,
widening access, improving
quality: introductory comments**

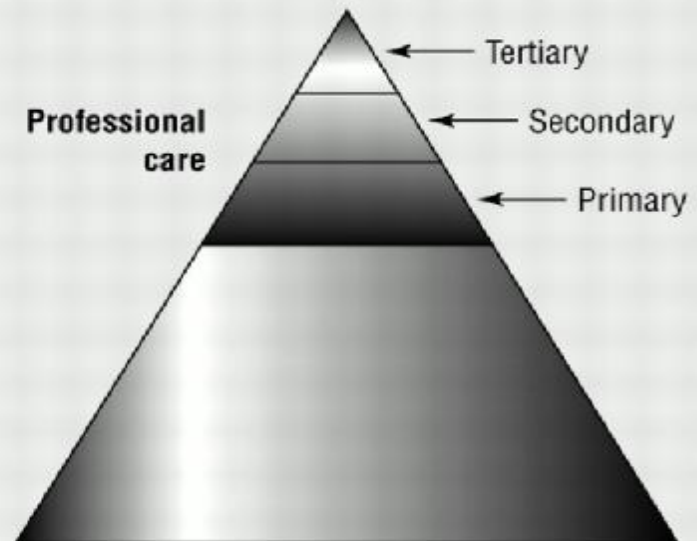
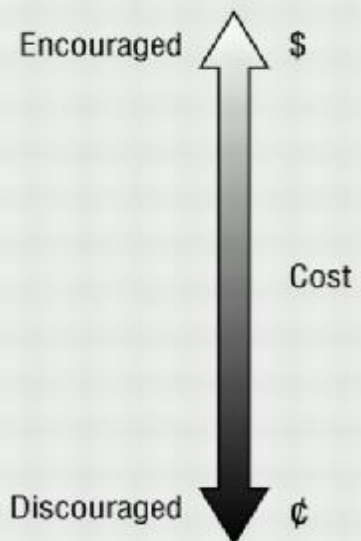
Richard Smith

Chair, Patients Know Best

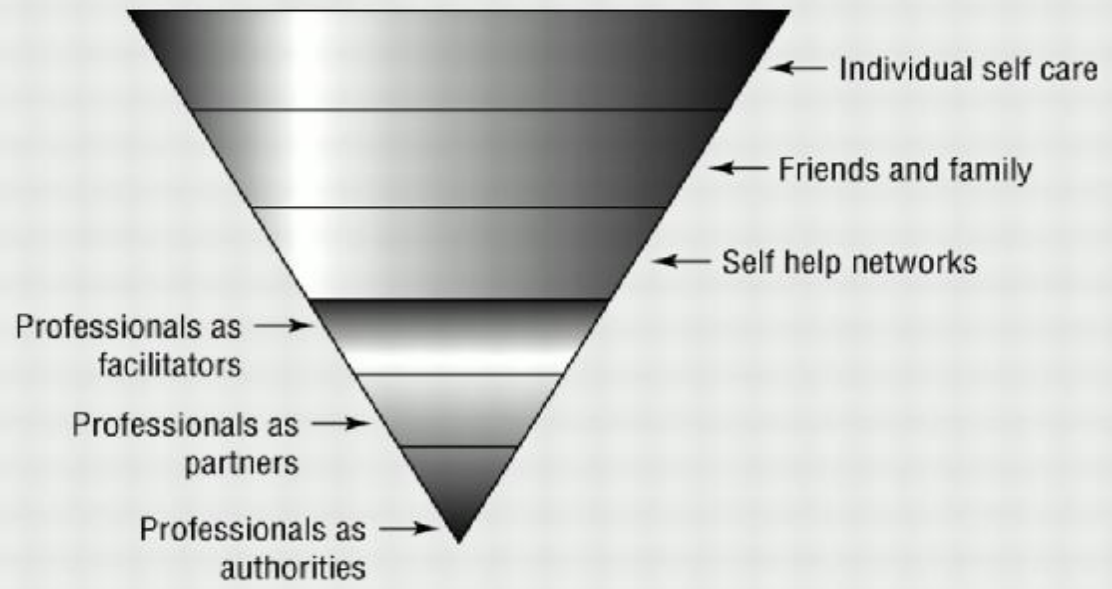
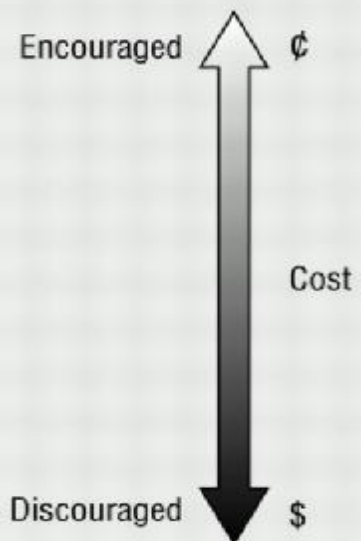
Former editor, BMJ

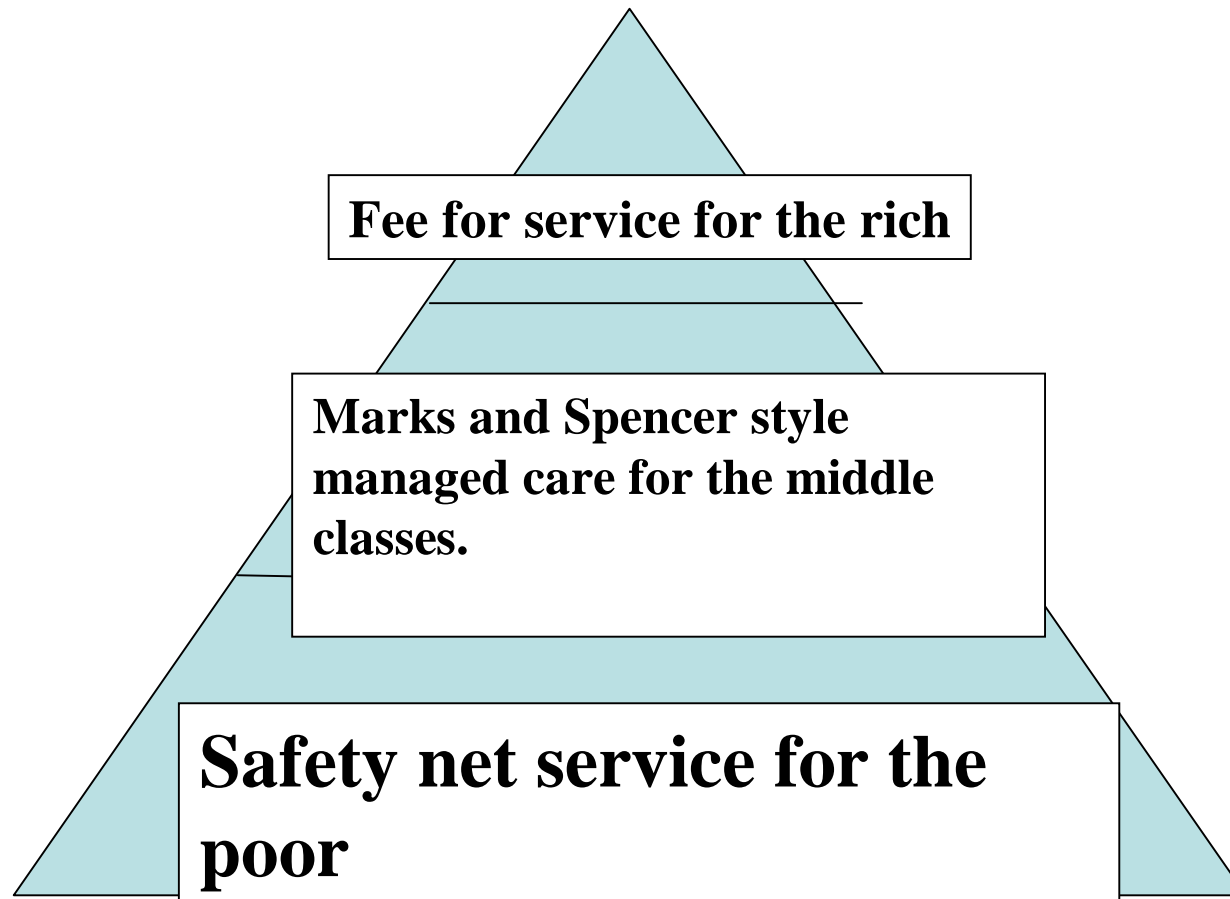


Industrial age medicine



Information age health care





The way all health systems will be. Uwe Reinhardt

Characteristics of an optimal health system: Institute of Medicine

- Safe
- Effective, evidence based
- Patient centred
- Timely, no waiting
- Efficient, avoids waste
- Affordable, sustainable
- Equitable, no variation by gender, ethnic group, etc
- Constantly improves

IOM report: the problem

- Between the health care we have and the care we could have lies not just a gap, but a chasm
- A system full of underuse, inappropriate use, and overuse of care
- Unable to deliver today's science and technology; will be even worse with innovations in the pipeline
- A fragmented system characterised by unnecessary duplication, long waits, and delays

IOM report: the problem

- Poor information systems; disorganised knowledge
- “Brownian motion” rather than organisational redesign
- A system designed for episodic care when most disease is chronic
- Health care providers operate in silos
- Driven by producers rather than consumers of care
- **Increasingly unaffordable**

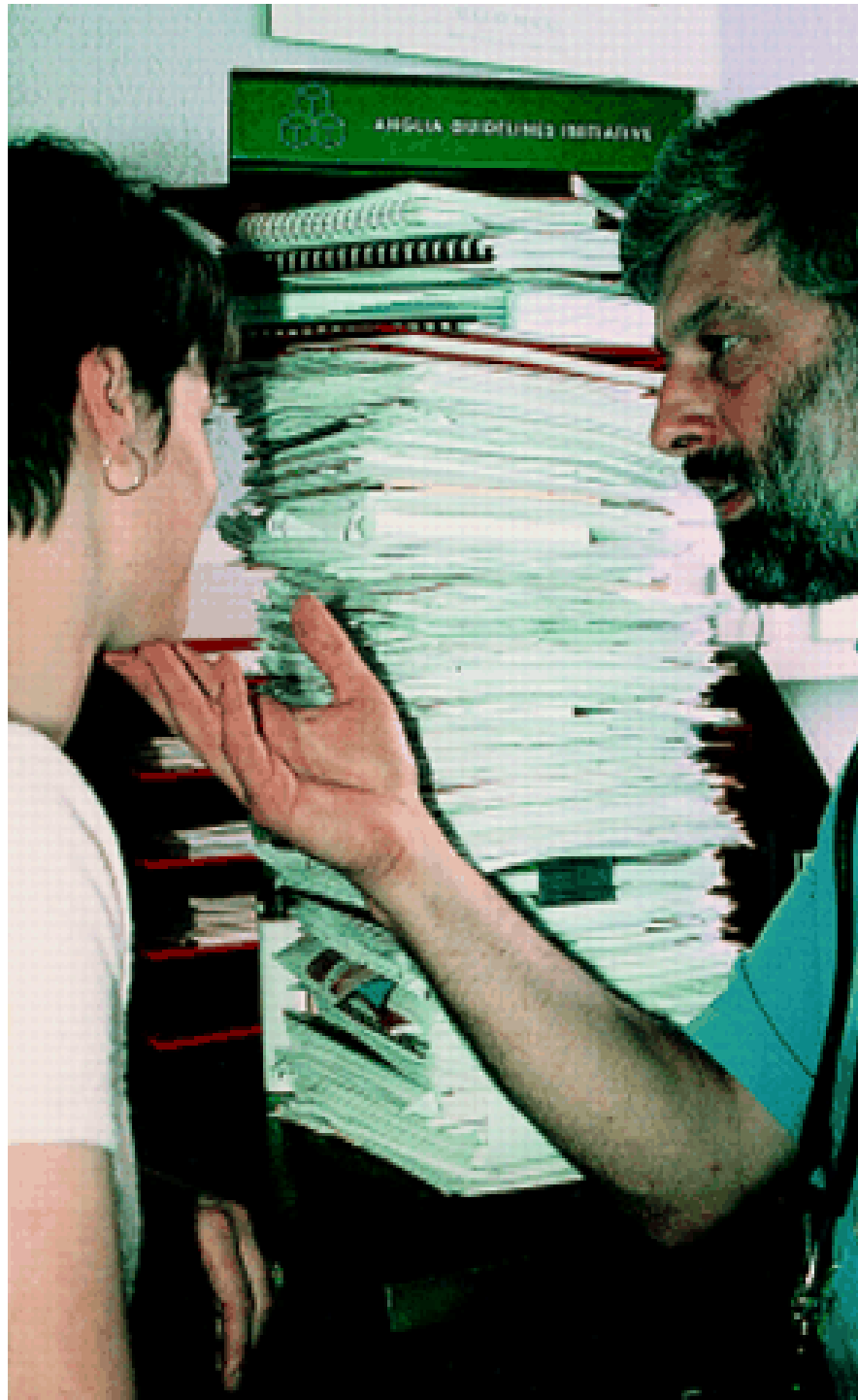
The four major challenges

- Quality and safety
- Access
- Responsiveness/usability
- Affordability
- Information and communication technology and better use of the internet can make a major difference with all of these problems



Art by iDul

Small scale: a doctor's view



Words used by 41 doctors to describe their information supply

- Impossible Impossible Impossible
Impossible Impossible Impossible
 - Overwhelming Overwhelming
Overwhelming Overwhelming
Overwhelming Overwhelming
 - Difficult Difficult Difficult Difficult
 - Daunting Daunting Daunting
 - Pissed off
 - Choked
 - Depressed
 - Despairing
 - Worrisome
 - Saturation
- Vast
 - Help
 - Exhausted
 - Frustrated
 - Time consuming
 - Dreadful
 - Awesome
 - Struggle
 - Mindboggling
 - Unrealistic
 - Stress
 - Challenging Challenging Challenging
 - Excited
 - Vital importance

Unanswered questions



- “During the average 10 minute consultation between a doctor and a patient at least one question will arise that neither the doctor nor the patient can answer.”

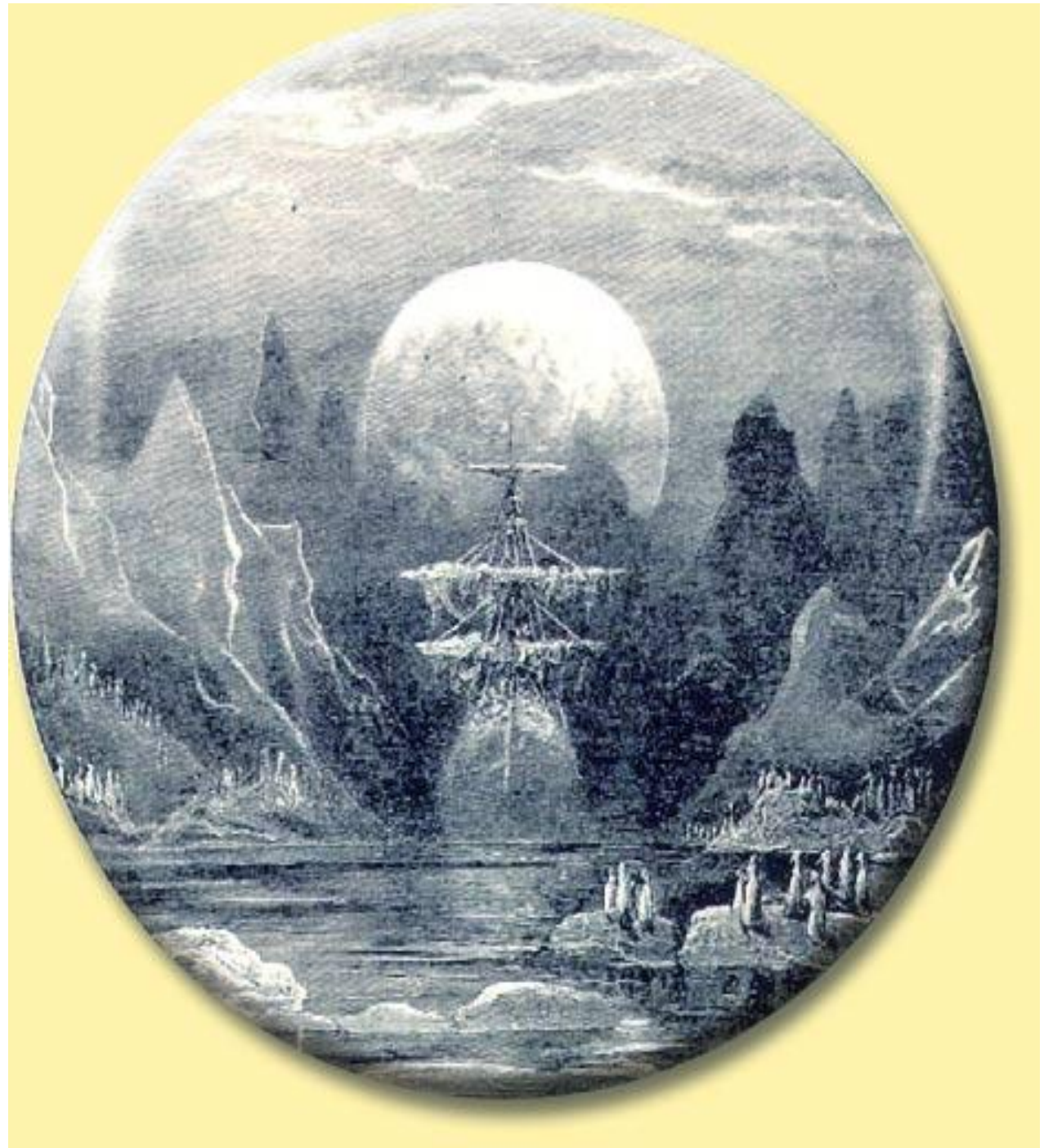
The information paradox

*Doctors are overwhelmed
with information but
cannot find the
information they need
when confronted with a
question.*

Muir Gray



*Water, water
everywhere
Nor any drop to
drink*



A vision of a better information tool for clinicians 1

- Part of the information system that doctors use as they see patients
- Able to answer highly complex questions
- Connected to a large valid database
- Electronic
- Fast

A vision of a better information tool for clinicians 2

- Easy to use
- Portable
- Prompts doctors in a way that's helpful not demeaning
- Connected to the patient record
- Gives evidence related to individual patients
- A servant of patients as well as doctors
- Provides psychological support

Small scale: a patient's view

Me as a patient



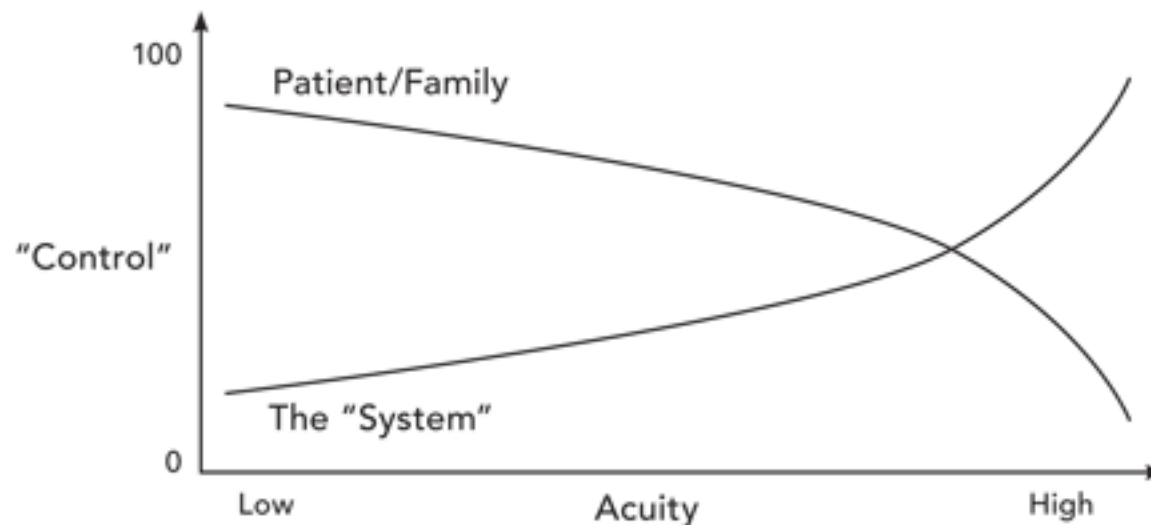
- Can't consult on line
- Much liked doctor says no
- Gained access to electronic record after six months of sweat
- Records wrong, incomplete misspelt, say nothing about me

Who really makes decisions?

Medscape®

www.medscape.com

The majority of health care occurs at the low-acuity end of the scale, where outcomes are controlled not by physicians or "the system" but by the everyday choices of individuals and families, which are strongly influenced by their values, culture and communities. The largest opportunity clinical staff have to influence health outcomes is to influence choices by partnering over time.



Source: Fam Pract Manag © 2008 American Academy of Family Physicians

Doug Eby



- “Health professionals simply won’t be able to do our jobs properly if we succumb to the myth that people normally obey doctors’ orders...They don’t. As patients we don’t.”
- Doug Eby, South Central Foundation Senior Physician Executive

Lord Crisp

- “Clinicians talk about the importance of empowering patients. They generally mean giving people the knowledge and skills to look after themselves, have choices, and make decisions. They mean that clinicians shouldn’t just do things to and for patients...but we are starting in the wrong place. We need to see the world the other way up and start by recognising that in general patients have the control.”
- Nigel Crisp, former chief executive of the NHS, in “Turning the World Upside Down: the Search for Global Health in the 21st Century

[Home](#) [Our products](#) [About us](#) [Blog](#) [Podcast](#) [Log in](#) [Welcome to Patients Know Best](#)

HOME

Trust

SECURITY AND PRIVACY
A SECURE WEB SITE YOU CONTROL

Partnership

YOUR DOCTORS, NURSES AND RELATIVES
WORK WITH THE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT YOUR
HEALTH

Health

WELLNESS
IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH



PATIENTS KNOW BEST®
MANAGE YOUR HEALTH

www.patientsknowbest.com

Two questions for you

- Why have we been so slow to harness the power of the internet in healthcare?
- How can we harness that power as fast as possible to improve safety and quality, access, responsiveness, and affordability?
- Each write a blog with your answers at the end of the day