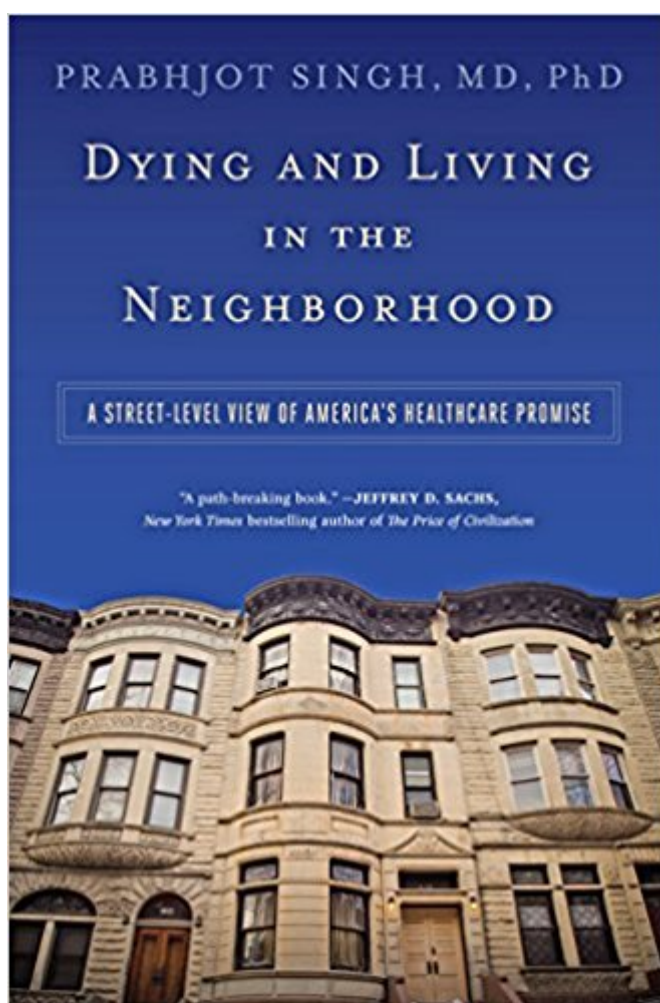


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# Dying And Living In The Neighborhood: A Street-Level View Of America's Healthcare Promise



## Synopsis

Even as US spending on healthcare skyrockets, impoverished Americans continue to fall ill and die of preventable conditions. Although the majority of health outcomes are shaped by non-medical factors, public and private healthcare reform efforts have largely ignored the complex local circumstances that make it difficult for struggling men, women, and children to live healthier lives. In *Dying and Living in the Neighborhood*, Dr. Prabhjot Singh argues that we must look beyond the walls of the hospital and into the neighborhoods where patients live and die to address the troubling rise in chronic disease. Building on his training as a physician in Harlem, Dr. Singh draws from research in sociology and economics to look at how our healthcare systems are designed and how the development of technologies like the Internet enable us to rethink strategies for assembling healthier neighborhoods. In part I, Singh presents the story of Ray, a patient whose death illuminated how he had lived, his neighborhood context, and the forces that accelerated his decline. In part II, Singh introduces nationally recognized pioneers who are acting on the local level to build critical components of a neighborhood-based health system. In the process, he encounters a movement of people and organizations with similar visions of a porous, neighborhood-embedded healthcare system. Finally, in part III he explores how civic technologies may help forge a new set of relationships among healthcare, public health, and community development. Every rising public health leader, frontline clinician, and policymaker in the country should read this book to better understand how they can contribute to a more integrated and supportive healthcare system.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 312 pages

Publisher: Johns Hopkins University Press; 1 edition (August 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1421420449

ISBN-13: 978-1421420448

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #290,003 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #125 in [Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Administration & Policy > Health Policy](#) #254 in [Books > Medical Books > Administration & Medicine Economics > Health Policy](#) #276 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Urban & Land Use Planning](#)

## Customer Reviews

"... Singh's thesis merits discussion for anyone interested in curing a sick health care system." (Kirkus Reviews)"A path-breaking book sure to redirect inquiry in the United States on how to repair our broken health care system. While economists and politicians have suggested countless ways to tinker with the overpriced and underperforming system, Singh offers a much deeper, nuanced, and humane diagnosis of the problems. This book will stir major new thinking and creative approaches towards a more effective and decent U.S. health care system." (Jeffrey D. Sachs, bestselling author and Director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University)"In this sorely needed book, Singh takes a supremely unique approach, imbuing the subject of population health with a personal story to convincingly argue that healthcare needs to build from the community out to the medical sector rather than from the hospital in. Anyone in healthcare will want to read this essential book. An incredible and absolutely riveting read." (Yasmin Sultana Meah, MD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai)"In many nations with few resources, models linking health services to communities are well developed. Except for scattered examples, the US system is largely disconnected from neighborhoods and their problems. With penetrating analysis and compelling storytelling, Prabhjot Singh calls for connecting our system to people and their neighborhoods, almost quite literally turning it on its head." (Drew Altman, CEO, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation)"As a physician and resident of Harlem, Prabhjot Singh understands that good health has more to do with what happens in neighborhoods than in health care institutions. In *Dying and Living in the Neighborhood*, Dr. Singh exposes the realities and explores the solutions in an engaging, scholarly, and personal narrative." (Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, President and CEO, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)"Singh's novel and compelling look at what really causes disease is a must-read for new physicians looking to understand sources of power and ways to leverage it in today's paradoxical health care system." (Elizabeth H. Bradley, Yale University, coauthor of *The American Healthcare Paradox: Why Spending More Is Getting Us Less*)"This brilliant and sweeping book is a rich source of insights. Prabhjot Singh draws on extensive travel, interviews and research to rightly argue that policies and business models need to be adjusted to empower neighborhoods as partners for better community health. He is one of that small, but growing, band of physicians and policymakers who recognize that better health is much more than healthcare." (Stuart M. Butler, Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution)"Unafraid of complexity, Singh persuasively argues that nothing less than health care designed by the communities it is intended to serve will set us on a path towards true population health. It is a tour de force, and left me feeling more optimistic!" (Diane Meier, MD, Director, Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC))"A remarkable book that

bridges public health and healthcare, bringing lessons of global health to the streets of New York City. Singh is the scholar we need: data-driven, practical, but ultimately impatient. He is changing healthcare one clinic, one hospital, one neighborhood, and one city at a time." (Ashish K. Jha, Director, Harvard Global Health Institute)"At this time of health care transformation, Dr. Singh champions an innovative vision for a more integrated, community-centered approach to wellness. Drawing on real-world cases and experiences, he weaves a thought-provoking narrative of how the power of collaboration across multiple spheres can build a healthier America for everyone." (Olympia Snowe, former Senator from Maine)"Dr. Singh weaves stories of history, policy, and economics, into a rich tapestry that provides both an incisive commentary on the challenges of health economics and public policy and a poignant glimpse of the impact on the lives of real people. An important read for anyone working to transform health care and create healthy communities." (Don Berwick, former Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services)"As Singh pulls together the moving pieces—the neighborhood, the health care sector, community organizations, and government—into a vision of how to "integrate the whole," it seems feasible that anchoring our health to our neighborhood will bring the kind of well-being, humanity, and equity that we can afford, and that we deserve." (Health Affairs)

Prabhjot Singh, MD, PHD, is the director of the Arnhold Institute for Global Health and chairman of the Department of Health System Design & Global Health at the Mount Sinai Health System. He is also the special advisor for design and strategy for the Peterson Center on Healthcare.

Dr. Singh's book presents a unique and valuable perspective about contemporary US healthcare from a vantage point few others could provide. Trained as a physician-scientist who carried his expertise into public health and health systems engineering, Dr. Singh builds poignant and nuanced stories of individual patients and practitioners and effectively elucidates their meaning and essential importance to the larger story of contemporary health care. Dr. Singh writes in a manner that is one part literary writer, one part social scientist, and one part systems engineer. The solutions presented in Part III of this book provide an outstanding topology of the methods and means by which innovators in public health will create more dynamic and robust health systems in the coming years and decades. If you're interested in a look at burgeoning US public health transformations in the post-Affordable Care Act age—in a manner that is accessible and enjoyable to read—this book is a great place to start.

Dr. Singh's book is the best combination of urban sociology and public health knowledge available in print. Using his archetypal Ray, Singh goes from knowledge of neighborhoods to availability of health resources and returns with trenchant recommendations. I know of no other analysis that achieves such a synthesis.

Great

New York author Prabhjot Singh, MD, PHD, is the director of the Arnhold Institute for Global Health and chairman of the Department of Health System Design & Global Health at the Mount Sinai Health System. He is also the special advisor for design and strategy for the Peterson Center on Healthcare. He is trained as both scientist and physician and was born in Harlem and continues to practice there. He brings significant depth to this surgical exploration of the American health care delivery system. In the telling preface to this book Dr. Singh states, "The inspiration for this book is a patient who died under my care. He turned out to be a neighbor, as well, and I only really got to know him after he died. I refer to him as Ray. His daughter unexpectedly invited me to his funeral, where I met his friends, family, and congregation. Like Ray, many of these people were living with chronic diseases and were unwell. I was puzzled by how a place so close to nine major regional hospitals, countless clinics, a world-famous public health department, and substantial social and economic investments could be so persistently unhealthy. How being part of a great American city, awash with wealth and opportunity, can merely be a noisy backdrop of healthcare in America that was visible only from the streets he walked. My work with CHWs across Africa had prepared me to see his world of the neighborhood and my world of the hospital as interconnected, even if this connection was yet to be clearly defined. But it became obvious that if we did not build this connectivity and make it part of how we do healthcare in America, more of my neighbors would meet unnecessary early deaths. With real people in mind, the question shifts: how do we build this missing layer?" With that poignant thought Dr Singh offers a book that shares the healthcare delivery system as it currently stands in this country "with all the wealth of the pharmacology companies, Insurance moguls, highly funded hospitals, top of the line new mechanical (read laparoscopic and robotic) replacements of physicians hands, the expensive laboratory studies and diagnostic tools, the computer medical record replacements of the eye to eye hands on doctor patient relationship" and still the streets outside the meccas are ill with uninformed poorly followed diseased patients unable to be funded or to pay the skyrocketing costs of technically advanced medicine. His suggestions of how to incorporate our current high state of knowledge with

computer communication into the neighborhoods, extending the care and treatment and information available within the halls of hospitals and clinics into the place where people live and associate and die. This is a book that is important, easy to read, filled with not only fine ideas of centralized governance and ways to put medicine into the each of citizens' one that should be required for all physicians, hospitals, medical schools, and politicians. Excellent. Grady Harp, October 16I received this book at no charge in exchange for my honest review

Dr. Singh has finally written the story so many in healthcare have long wanted to tell: how the problems in this country's health go so far beyond problems with hospitals or health insurance, and deep into the roots of our communities and neighborhoods. If we in the healthcare sector truly want to improve health, we have to be partners to communities, both sharing our expertise and learning with a beginner's mind from the rich wisdom of our neighbors. By highlighting the extraordinary stories of how this work is already being done, from Louisiana to Minnesota, Dr. Singh not only describes the root problems of health in this country, he shows us the path forward to a healthier nation. This is a must-read for anyone concerned about the health and future of their children, neighbors, or patients.

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