



The Ernst Strüngmann Forum announces the new

# Strüngmann Forum Report

Julia Lupp  
Series Editor

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## Better Doctors, Better Patients, Better Decisions *Envisioning Health Care 2020*

Edited by Gerd Gigerenzer and J. A. Muir Gray

Contrary to popular opinion, one of the main problems in providing uniformly excellent health care is not lack of money but lack of knowledge—on the part of both doctors and patients. The studies in this book show that many doctors and most patients do not understand the available medical evidence. Both patients and doctors are “risk illiterate”—frequently unable to tell the difference between actual risk and relative risk. Doctors often cannot interpret test results, and patients cannot make informed decisions if they are given bad information. Unbelievably, treatment varies greatly from one region to another. For example, in one referral region in Iowa, sixty percent of prostate patients had surgery, while in another region only fifteen percent had the same surgery. This unwarranted disparity in treatment decisions is the rule rather than the exception in the United States and Europe. All of this contributes to much wasted spending in health care.

In *Better Doctors, Better Patients, Better Decisions* the contributors investigate the roots of the problem, from the emphasis in medical research on technology and blockbuster drugs to the lack of education for doctors and patients. They call for new, more enlightened health care with better medical education, journals that report study outcomes completely and transparently, and patients in control of their personal medical records, not afraid of statistics but able to use them to make informed decisions about their treatments.

“This impressive series of position pieces is excellent and essential reading for all those seeking to promote patient involvement and improve patient experiences of health care. It brings together leading thinkers, planners, and implementers in the field, and as one would expect from the title is genuinely visionary—challenging patients, clinicians, policy-makers, and journalists to adapt to a rapidly changing world and ways of doing health care.”

—Adrian G. K. Edwards

Department of Primary Care and  
Public Health, School of Medicine,  
Cardiff University

“Health care needs an overarching goal that is shared by all stakeholders, and the one that is emerging is improvement of the value of care from the patients’ perspective. This collection of papers from international experts explores the wide range of work that lies ahead, always thoughtfully and often brilliantly.”

—Thomas H. Lee

Network President, Partners  
Healthcare System, Boston

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Photo by Uwe Dettmar

**Gerd Gigerenzer** (left) is Director at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin. He is the author of *Calculated Risks*, among other books, and the coeditor of *Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox* (2001) and *Heuristics and the Law* (2006), both published by the MIT Press.

**J. A. Muir Gray** (right) is director of the National Knowledge Service, Oxford. He is the author of *Evidence-Based Healthcare*.

### **Contributors**

Gerd Antes, Hilda Bastian, Jean Bousquet, Bruce Bower, Henry Brighton, Heather Buchan, Angela Coulter, David A. Davis, Michael Diefenbach, Norbert Donner-Banzhoff, Glyn Elwyn, Markus A. Feufel, Wolfgang Gaissmaier, Davina Ghersi, Gerd Gigerenzer, Ben Goldacre, J. A. Muir Gray, Martin Härter, Ralph Hertwig, Günther Jonitz, David Klemperer, Kai Kolpatzik, Julia Kreis, France Légaré, Wolf-Dieter Ludwig, Marjukka Mäkelä, Talya Miron-Shatz, Ingrid Mühlhauser, Albert G. Mulley, Jr., David E. Nelson, Norbert Schmacke, Gisela Schott, Jay Schulkin, Holger Schünemann, Lisa M. Schwartz, Daniela Simon, Richard S. W. Smith, David Spiegelhalter, Johann Steurer, Odette Wegwarth, John E. Wennberg, Claudia Wild, Steven Woloshin, Holger Wormer

**The Ernst Strüngmann Forum** is founded on the tenets of scientific independence and the inquisitive nature of the human mind. Through its innovative communication process, it facilitates the continual expansion of knowledge.

Themes selected for a Forum transcend classic disciplinary boundaries. They are problem-oriented, of high-priority interest to the disciplines involved, and timely to the advancement of science. Proposals are submitted by leading scientists active in the field and selected by the Forum's Scientific Advisory Board.

A Forum can best be imagined as an intellectual retreat or think tank. International experts are brought together to identify gaps in knowledge; key questions are posed and innovative ways of filling these gaps are sought. Each project creates a unique synergism, from which new insights emerge and future research directions are delineated.

To complete the communication process, the Ernst Strüngmann Forum publishes the results in partnership with The MIT Press.

**The Ernst Strüngmann Forum** has been made possible through the generous support of the Ernst Strüngmann Foundation, inaugurated by Andreas and Thomas Strüngmann.

### **Ernst Strüngmann Forum**

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