Medical Professionalism in Lebanon: Challenges and Aspirations

Kamal F Badr, MD
Associate Dean for Medical Education
American University of Beirut
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• Challenges to Physicians
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  – War: Breakdown of norms
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• Challenges to Physicians
  – War: Breakdown of norms
  – Invasion of Money into Medicine – Global
Doctors in the 19th century: “accident insurance” begins

- Patients and doctors dealt with each other on a one-to-one basis.
- Payment structures were haphazard and individually decided.
- In the late 19th century, "accident insurance" began to be available, which operated much like modern disability insurance. This payment model continued until the start of the 20th century in some jurisdictions (like California), where all laws regulating health insurance actually referred to disability insurance.
- Accident insurance was first offered in the United States by the Franklin Health Assurance Company of Massachusetts (1850) which offered insurance against injuries arising from railroad and steamboat accidents.
- Sixty organizations were offering accident insurance in the U.S. by 1866, but the industry consolidated rapidly soon thereafter. While there were earlier experiments, the origins of sickness coverage in the U.S. effectively date from 1890.
19th Century: Enter Big Pharma!

• **Merck** in Germany Originating as a pharmacy founded in Darmstadt in 1668. In 1827 Heinrich Emanuel Merck began the transition towards an industrial and scientific concern, by manufacturing and selling alkaloids.

• **GlaxoSmithKline’s** origins can be traced back as far as 1715, but it was only in the middle of the 19th century that Beecham became involved in the industrial production of medicine, producing patented medicine from 1842, and the world’s first factory for producing only medicines in 1859².
19th Century: Enter Big Pharma II

• in the USA, Pfizer was founded in 1849, by two German immigrants, initially as a fine chemicals business. They expanded rapidly during the American civil war as demand for painkillers and antiseptics rocketed.

• Whilst Pfizer was providing the medicines needed for the Union war effort, a young cavalry commander named Colonel Eli Lilly was serving in their army. A trained pharmaceutical chemist, Lilly set up a pharmaceutical business in 1876.

• Another military man in the drugs business was Edward Robinson Squibb. He set up a laboratory in 1858, like Pfizer supplying Union armies in the civil war, and laying the basis for BMS.
In the early part of the 20th century, a number of powerful and wealthy individuals who owned or managed a significant proportion of the corporate wealth of the United States, wealth that had been earned during the industrial revolution of the latter part of the 19th century, recognized that the ‘industrialization’ of health care would offer them further opportunities to control even more wealth and power.
### The World’s 50 Largest Companies By Market Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Value M</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Value M</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>General Electric Company</td>
<td>$278,343</td>
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<td>Royal Dutch Petroleum</td>
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<td>Microsoft Corporation</td>
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<td>Pfizer Inc</td>
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<td>Wal-Mart Stores Inc</td>
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<td>Wells Fargo &amp; Company</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Citigroup Inc</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Johnson &amp; Johnson</td>
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<td>Amgen Incorporated</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>International Business Machines</td>
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<td>Dell Computer Corporation</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>American International Group, Inc.</td>
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<td>Nestle S.A.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>BP PLC</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>Toyota Motor Corporation</td>
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<td>Vodafone Group plc</td>
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<td>Royal Bank of Scotland Group</td>
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<td>Merck &amp; Co, Inc.</td>
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<td>AstraZeneca PLC</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Intel Corporation</td>
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<td>PepsiCo Inc.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>GlaxoSmithKline plc</td>
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<td>Farmland Milk</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>HSBC Holdings plc</td>
<td>$124,445</td>
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<td>ChevronTexaco Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>HSBC Holdings PLC (HK)</td>
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<td>Eli Lilly and Company</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Cisco Systems Incorporated</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Home Depot Inc</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>Oracle Corporation</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>AOL Time Warner, Inc</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>J.P. Morgan Chase &amp; Co</td>
<td>$63,433</td>
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Source: Corporate Information, Winthrop Corporation. 2003  
www.dr-rath-foundation.org
Twentieth Century: Greed Meets Medicine: Enter The Insurance Industry

- The first employer-sponsored group disability policy was issued in 1911.

- **During the middle to late 20th century, traditional disability insurance evolved into modern health insurance programs. Today, most comprehensive private health insurance programs cover the cost of routine, preventive, and emergency health care procedures, and most prescription drugs, but this is not always the case.**

- Hospital and medical expense policies were introduced during the first half of the 20th century. During the 1920s, individual hospitals began offering services to individuals on a pre-paid basis.

- **Blue Cross organizations** The predecessors of today's Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) originated beginning in 1929, through the 1930s and on during World War II.
Mid-20th Century: The Insurers Take the Patients
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  – War: Breakdown of norms
  – Invasion of Money into Medicine – Global
    • Drivers: “Managed” Care/Insurance “Industry”/Big Pharma
    • Doctors can be millionaires!
    • Attraction of ‘wrong’ models into the profession
Medical Professionalism in Lebanon: Challenges and Aspirations

- Challenges to Students
Generation Y: Professionalism?
Generation Y, Echo Boomers or Millennials

Current Population: 71 million
- The largest cohort since the Baby Boomers
- Gen Y kids are known as incredibly sophisticated, technology wise, immune to most traditional marketing and sales pitches...as they not only grew up with it all, they’ve seen it all and been exposed to it all since early childhood.
Medical Professionalism in Lebanon: Challenges and Aspirations

• Challenges to Students
  – Attitude and norms: war and globalization
  – Generational gaps in communication
  – Bad role models among senior physicians
The Challenges to the Profession

• How to protect the doctor-patient relationship from the intrusion of profit-seeking companies (pharmaceuticals and insurance).
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• How to help young physicians understand and assimilate money into their profession without becoming its servants.
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• How to rid the profession of those who enter it with the primary goal of making money.
• How to help young physicians understand and assimilate money into their profession without becoming its servants.
• How to create a new generation of physicians, committed to their roles not only as superb clinicians and innovative researchers, but also as merciful healers.
I don't care too much for money, money can't buy me love.