

# The Healing of America

## Reader's Guide

- What program features that were in place in other countries do you think make sense to incorporate in our health care system? Which ones shouldn't be?
- Do you think Maine could incorporate those changes alone, or do you think this can only happen on a national level?
- Have you ever forgone a medical service because of the costs and ended up having a much bigger problem?
- Do you know anyone who has ever experienced a medical error? What did they do about it? Do you think that was the right thing to do?
- Reid noted in his book that Japan had a dramatic reduction in tooth and gum diseases after it mandated that children brush their teeth in school after lunch (a trait that carried through adulthood for many). Do you think Maine should enact similar laws? Do you have any other ideas of mandatory preventive practices that should be required by law or encouraged through incentives or other means? If so, what are they?
- If you had a limited budget for health care services for each person in your company and their family, how would you spend your money in order of importance?
- If you could pick a health care system for our country, would you keep what we have or model our healthcare system after another country. If so, which one?
- What was the most surprising fact you learned from reading the book?
- Many countries in the book pay the full cost of training doctors, do you think that is a good idea?

- Every nation observed in the book that relies on health insurance plans to provide coverage to all of its citizens requires all employed patients to buy health insurance for themselves and their families. Do you think that makes sense?
- Do you think citizens have a right to healthcare services just like they have a right to vote? What about illegal immigrants?
- All of the countries described in the book except the US required hospitals and doctors to charge the same exact fee regardless of who was paying for the service. Taiwan, the most efficient healthcare delivery system in the world, has the same rules for every doctor and patient. Is that something you favor?
- Other countries do not pay for services if the treating doctor did not provide all the care experts recommend for that condition. Do you think we should do the same thing in our country or should we continue paying the same fee regardless of the quality of care provided?
- The author showed that several countries had better customer service for patients after universal coverage than they did before. Why do you think that is?

## Creative Ideas to Spice Up Your Book Club

- \*Dress in outfits of the countries highlighted in the book.
- \*Serve foods from the countries that are examined in the book.
- \*If you are having a potluck at your book club, ask your guests to bring a healthy menu item from a country they thought had the best health care system.