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The Little Black Book of Billionaire Secrets

Doctors' Declaration Of Independence



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The most common and gratifying word I have heard from doctors since trumpeting the importance of the **Quadruple Aim** and starting the seed stage venture fund named the **Quad Aim Fund** is “hope.” It’s been striking how many doctors have said that they had lost hope and hearing the stories of the highest-performing healthcare delivery organizations



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restored their hope in their profession. The primary reason why is that virtually every high-performing model I've chronicled is led by doctors.

If you study the [tricks the healthcare industry uses that has led to healthcare's hyperinflation](#), doctors have little to do with them. Yet, as the most prominent member of industry, they tend to get disproportionately blamed for out-of-control healthcare costs. One could cut the compensation of all doctors in half and we'd still have a catastrophic cost problem. The innovative doctors who have [solved healthcare's most vexing problem—pricing failure—didn't take a big pay cut to make it happen. Rather, they cut out the administrative burden and the massive](#)

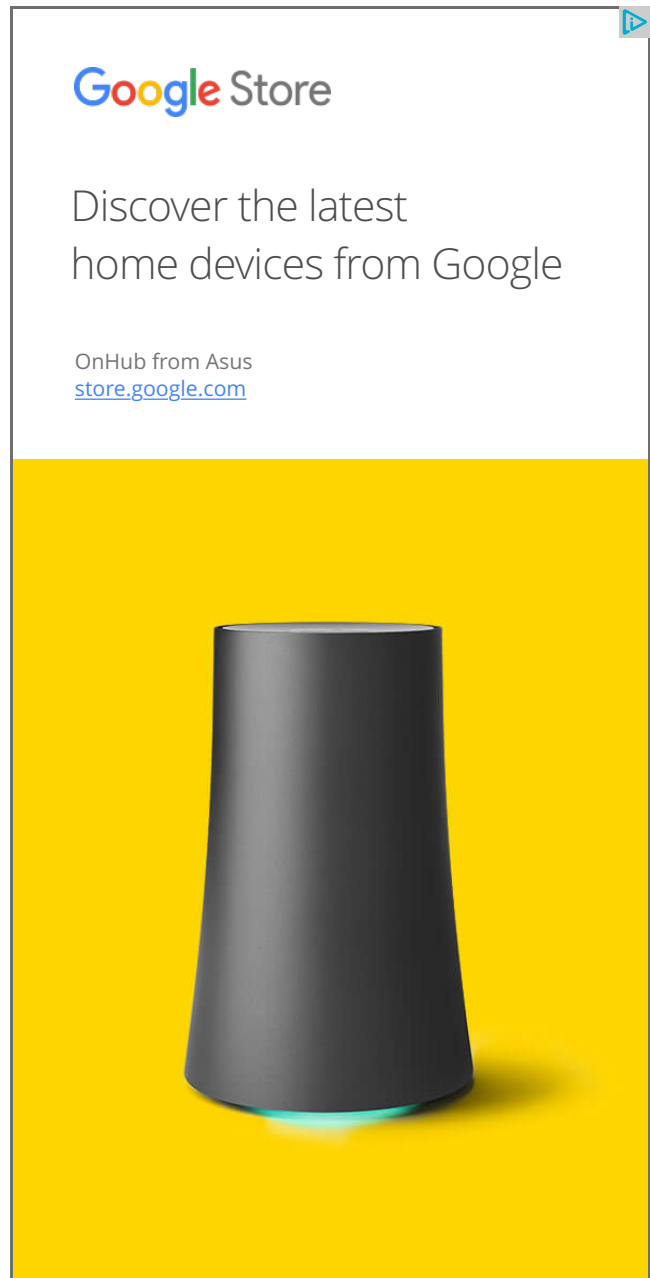
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overhead from the bubble-like 40% over-capacity of hospital beds that is effectively a redistribution tax on every citizen in the country.

I understand the reasons why there is frustration by doctors and an epidemic of burnout amongst clinicians. Some chalk it up to knee-jerk resistance to change and financial concerns. I don't doubt that is the case for some; however, the vast majority of doctors see the under-performance of the status quo healthcare system and want something better. However, a key challenge for them, as powerfully told in the video below by Dr. Zubin Damania, is doctors have been rule-followers to get where they are. They endured years of gratification-delaying and the hazing of medical school and



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residency to get where they are. There is a growing awakening by doctors that the best people to transform healthcare are doctors themselves, and many are stepping up to the challenge—they feel their own identity and the profession depend on it. In the video, Dr. Damania describes how he has been personally transformed following his awakening after being liberated from a high-prestige academic medical center:

- “When people would talk about their careers or their lives, the ones that were most passionate and were loving what they did always aroused in me an unease. It was almost an anger or jealousy and I would see them and go, “Why is he so happy and fulfilled and doing what he loves to do and I’m doing everything I’m supposed to do but I feel empty?” On the other



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side of this waking up and being who I am, suddenly I felt like, “Oh my god, that’s me now.”



The [#Unbreak](#) campaign catalyzed by [athenahealth](#) ATHN -0.05% captures the desire doctors to have to fix the system they suffer in every day. Here’s how athenahealth puts it:

- “Everyone knows healthcare is broken. With the Unbreak campaign, we’re just shining a bright, harsh light on it—and laughing at the absurdity of the system. But though we embrace humor, we couldn’t be more serious about our desire to address and fix what’s broken.

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I had the opportunity to spend a day with [athenahealth](#) during their Hill Day, where they brought startups to educate congressional staffers on what's needed to move healthIT out of Siebel-era pricing and lack of interoperability where software is priced 10-100x more than the rest of the world and systems don't talk with each other. A good chunk of my day was spent talking with athenahealth's CEO Jonathan Bush and his team. When I reflect back on the day, America's Declaration of Independence comes to mind. The following were

some of topics we spoke about that day with the athenahealth team and the startup CEOs that joined them on the Hill:

- Doctors are central to driving the revolution in healthcare
- Millennials are on a clear path to being indentured servants to the healthcare system—it's hard to pursue life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness if you are going to spend half to three-quarters of your lifetime earnings on healthcare
- The most immediate threat to America is the status quo healthcare system
- Next-generation medical practices such as athenahealth's client, Privia, are key to the renaissance of healthcare

The doctor revolutionaries

“You never change things



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“by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”
— Buckminster Fuller

The pendulum is swinging back from medical practices becoming simple referral machines to high-margin services in health systems which has, sadly, become the norm for many health system-based doctors. I sometimes find myself telling doctors and even medical students that they should realize there are many options available to them beyond being a cog in the wheel of a mega-organization that is more concerned with milking as much volume and revenue as possible than fulfilling what is written in their mission statements. Some are starting their own organizations while others are transforming more established

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practices.

I believe the doctors listed below would be some of the signers of the doctors' declaration of independence and ascribe to the spirit of Buckminster Fuller's quote. As with the framers of the Constitution, these individuals span the political spectrum. The common thread is they [share a set of goals that transcend political party](#) (to the chagrin of political hacks who want to protect the existing regime). Many of them directly contributed to [the guiding principles for success in the new health ecosystem](#).

- [Dr. Orly Avitzur](#) is the medical director for *Consumer Reports*, among other things
- [Dr. Rajaie Batniji](#) [cofounded Collective Health](#) in the belief it could help employees receive

better care and coverage than what many experience with incumbent health plans

- While Dr. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) has been an opponent of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), he's worked across the aisle on [common-sense legislation](#) he co-sponsored with Rep. Jay Inslee (D-WA)—HR 3315—designed to support the reinvigoration of primary care. More recently, his immodestly named [World's Greatest Health Care Plan](#) is a serious-minded proposal that works to improve the ACA.
- [Dr. Rebecca Coelius](#) was the director of Health and Human Services for Code for America and is now the VP of product at Vital Labs, going after how hypertension and other chronic disease is managed outside the clinic walls

- Dr. Zubin Damania is the founder/CEO of Turntable Health and also the famous [ZDoggMD](#) pointing out some of the absurdities pervasive in healthcare and how things can be made better
- [Dr. Karen DeSalvo](#) is a physician and public health expert who currently serves as the acting assistant secretary for health which she concurrently serves as the national coordinator for health information technology and director of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
- [Dr. Steven Eisenberg](#) for adding love & music to #oncology and humanity to medicine (h/t Bunny Ellerin)
- The late Dr. Tom Ferguson coined the term e-patient many years before others were focused on

equipped, enabled, empowered and engaged patients. This is a [white paper](#) (PDF) finished by his colleagues after his untimely passing.

- [Dr. Rushika Fernandopulle](#) founded Iora Health to restore humanity to healthcare. They have proven to take on the [most challenging patient populations](#) and achieve outstanding outcomes and even take on individuals not addressed by the new health law with the [support of a Nobel Prize winner](#).
- [Dr. Atul Gawande](#) is one of the best writers in the medical field with his pieces in the *New Yorker* that often, and appropriately, ruffle feathers, as well as being an author of thought-provoking books such as *Being Mortal*
- [Dr. John Grohol](#) has been the founder and

CEO of Psych Central,
mental health &
psychology advocate,
author, researcher and
online innovator for two
decades

- Dr. Paul Grundy known as the “Godfather of the Patient-Centered Medical Home” is a key figure in developing what has become the platform for transformation that is the underpinning of value-based delivery and payment
- [Dr. Sachin H Jain](#) is CEO of one of the [population health heroes](#), Caremore (and a fellow FORBES contributor)
- Dr. Clay Johnston is the dean of the new Dell Medical School at the University of Texas, Austin, that is truly pursuing a blank-slate approach. Read more at [“Forget SXSW — Austin’s Most Radical New Idea May Be In Medical Education.”](#)

- [Dr. Daniel Kraft](#) is the chair for medicine at Singularity University and founder and chair of Exponential Medicine, which pretty much define the opposite of the status quo
- Dr. Rob Lamberts showed how an independent [family physician can strike out on their own](#) and provide better care and be more professionally satisfied
- Dr. Risa Lavizzo-Mourey is leading the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, spearheading its major re-focus on creating a [culture of health](#) that is impacting communities throughout the country.
- [Dr. Marty Makary](#), author of *Unaccountable*, has shaken up the medical establishment by shining a light on a system that puts good doctors in a bad position

- [Dr. Geraldine McGinty](#) for her work creating innovative radiology payment models and spearheading payment reform (h/t Bunny Ellerin)
- Dr. Farzad Mostashari [described Aledade's goals](#) as follows: "It's to help independent primary care doctors re-design their practices, and re-imagine their future. It's to put primary care back in control of healthcare, with 21st century data analytics and technology tools. It's to support them with people who will stand beside them, with no interests other than theirs in mind."
- Dr. Dave Sanders created ZoomCare and then the Kaiser of the 21st century, ZOOM+ Performance Health Insurance. Read more at ["I've Seen The Future Of Healthcare. I Like What I See."](#)

- [Dr. Daniel Schwartz](#) is the medical director of QxMD, nephrologist and medical director at Renal Program Fraser Health Authority and clinical assistant professor of medicine at University of British Columbia
- Dr. Stan Schwartz saw what Dr. Keith Smith was doing and has been creating a true [transparent medical market](#) and making that available to employers—both doctors and patients are saved from excruciating amounts of bureaucracy in a very appealing economic model to both parties
- [Dr. Vikas Saini](#) is tackling the scourge of overtreatment as leader of the Lown Institute
- [Dr. Danny Sands](#) cofounded the [Society for Participatory Medicine](#) while practicing and famously taking care of ePatient Dave

- Dr. Neel Shah was the founder of @CostsOfCare and advocate for more transparency, value and rationality in healthcare
- **Dr. Jordan Shlain** has been a leader in **value-based primary care**; founder of healthtech startups and a multi-contributor Medium publication called Tincture; and is the founding chairman of the Institute for Responsible Nutrition (IRN), a nonprofit which seeks to raise awareness of illness related to the production, distribution and marketing of processed food
- **Dr. Prabhjot Singh** works on how U.S. healthcare can learn from other industries and low-resource settings to improve health and healthcare and cofounded the One Million Community Health Worker Campaign

- Four years ago, I observed how doctors such as [Wendy Sue Swanson](#), [Natasha Burgert](#) and [Howard Luks](#) were doing something similar to how Sal Khan had “flipped the classroom.” This led to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation initiating a major program called [Flip the Clinic](#) to improve outcomes and participation by patients.
- [Dr. Mike Sevilla](#) for using [#hcs](#) to educate, elucidate and save family medicine [#FMRevolution](#) (h/t [Bunny Ellerin](#))
- [Dr. Craig Tanio](#) was previously the chief medical officer of the highly regarded [ChenMed](#). He founded [Rezilir Health](#), which improves health by integrating healthcare with communities, recognized that most [health outcomes are driven by factors outside of clinical care](#)

- [Dr. Bill Thomas](#) is an international authority on the emerging culture of aging and the Eden Alternative and Green House Project founder
- Dr. Eric Topol has written and spoken extensively about [how central the patient will be](#) as a participant in their care compared to traditional practices and highlights how the smartphone is the equivalent of the Gutenberg press for medicine
- Dr. Josh Umbehr has been a pioneer in the direct primary care movement including packaging what he built for his practice, [AtlasMD](#), and made that available to others.
- [Dr. Bryan Vartabedian](#) is showing other doctors how to be a “public” physician and the impact that can have on outcomes
- [Dr. Sue Woods](#) has been a pioneer in the open

notes movement as well
as user-driven healthIT

- Dr. Sheldon Zinberg
founded CareMore,
creating a national
leader in [treating the
frail elderly](#)

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doctor who has inspired
you and who was
overlooked. Let us know
what they are doing to
overachieve on the
Quadruple Aim. Whether
it is private practice,
venture-backed startups,
public health or health
benefits, each doctor is
contributing to the
revolution. In their own
ways, they have declared
independence from the
status quo. Their
liberation is key to the
revolution sweeping
through the healthcare
industry. Due to the
Quad Aim Fund and
making *The Big Heist*,
I've been fortunate to get
a sneak peak behind
what some very creative

doctor-entrepreneurs are doing. I'm also used as a sounding board for doctors plotting their next step due to their frustration with the status quo. Suffice it to say, the transformation of healthcare has barely begun.

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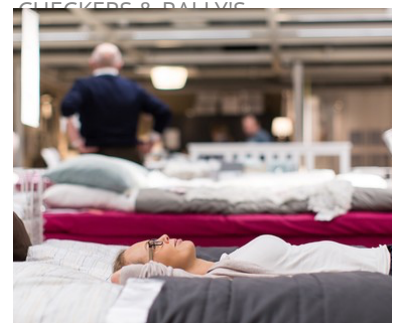


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