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The Lean Prescription: Powerful Medicine for Our Ailing Healthcare System

Patricia A. Gabow, Philip L. Goodman

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In this book, Dr. Gabow, former CEO of Denver Health of 20 years, teams up with Philip Goodman, a 34-year veteran of Denver Health who directed the Lean System group, to share their Lean journey. **The Lean Prescription: Powerful Medicine for Our Ailing Healthcare System** tells the story of how Dr. Gabow led Denver Health to become the first healthcare organization to be awarded the Shingo Bronze Medallion Prize for Operational Excellence.

Detailing the foundational Lean principles, the book provides readers with the benefit of the experience of an integrated healthcare system's successful seven-year Lean journey. This book grew out Gabow’s 40 years' experience as a practicing physician, teacher, researcher, and leader of a large, urban public healthcare system.

About 10 years into her 20 years as CEO of the healthcare system, she began to look at how one could actually make healthcare work right. After a year of study, she and her team concluded that Lean was exactly what healthcare needed. During the seven-year Lean journey that followed, Denver Health dramatically improved quality of care. Denver Health achieved a reduction of the expected mortality rate to the lowest among the academic health center members of the University Health System Consortium in 2011.The financial results were equally impressive. Denver Health realized almost $200 million of well-documented, hard financial benefit over seven years.

This book provides authoritative guidance on how to effectively implement a Lean transformation in a healthcare system that includes hospitals, HMOs, community health centers, call centers, and paramedics. Providing an accessible explanation of the Lean philosophy and tools, the book includes helpful exercises and examples of Lean applications. The book goes beyond the hospital environment to the broader healthcare sector.

In December 2015, Gabow and Goodman were awarded the Shingo Research and Professional Publication Award for the book. The Shingo Research and Professional Publication Award recognizes and promotes research and writing regarding new knowledge and understanding of lean and operational excellence.

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