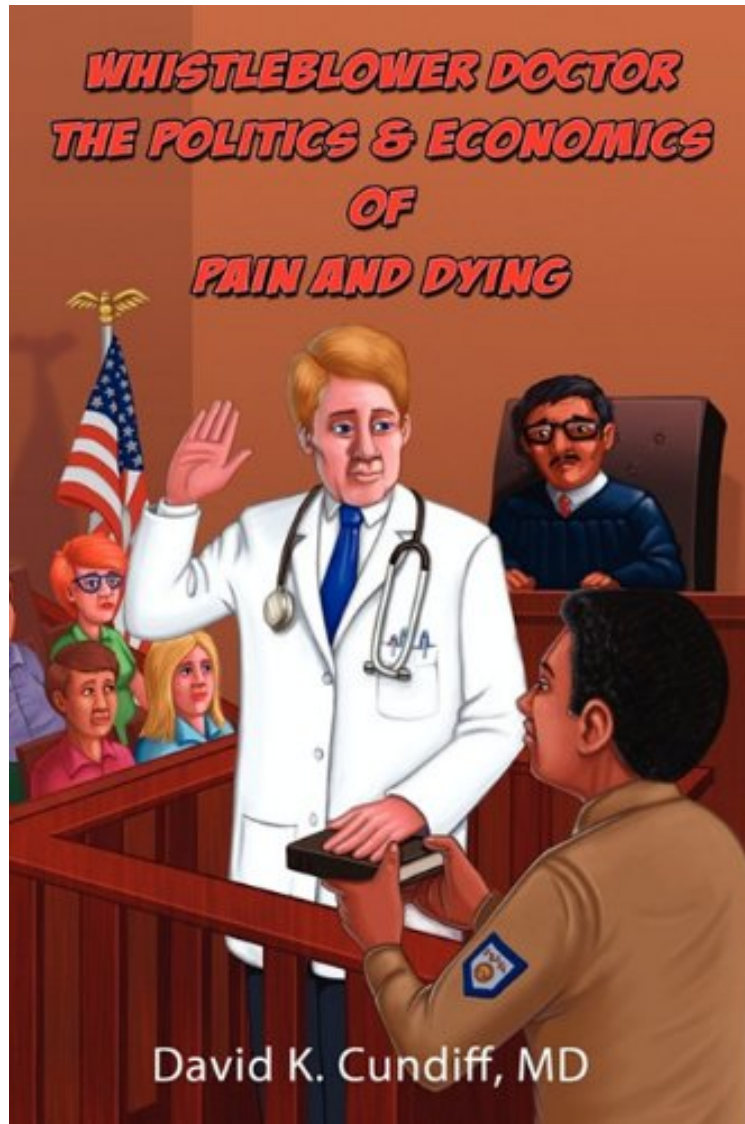


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Whistleblower Doctor--The Politics and Economics of Pain and Dying

David Keith Cundiff

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#7621198 in Books David Keith Cundiff 2011-04-25Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.02 x .49 x 5.981, .70 #File Name: 0976157136232 pagesWhistleblower Doctor The Politics and Economics of Pain and Dying | File size: 44.Mb

David Keith Cundiff : Whistleblower Doctor--The Politics and Economics of Pain and Dying before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Whistleblower Doctor--The Politics and Economics of Pain and Dying:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Whistleblowing Among Physicians is RareBy Richard A. Lippin

MDDoctors in the US, being highly paid, rarely engage in blatant whistleblowing. Yet in this well documented book Dr. David Cundiff exposes three issues that he both observed and personally experienced over 30 years as a Palliative Medicine/Hospice Doctor in Los Angeles. He lost his job, his license to practice medicine and part of his health because he had the moral courage to speak out. His book covers the morally egregious issue of profiteering by hospitals at the end of life, conversely poor pain management for the dying and also the unnecessary-probably dangerous-overuse of anticoagulant medications (blood thinners) for a very common condition in hospitalized patients called venous thromboembolism (VTE=clots in veins that could travel to your lungs). His book reads like a detailed timelined documentation of abuses against him and might hold special appeal to fellow doctors who feel "trapped" in a terribly corrupt and rigid US health care system as well as those interested in how whistleblowers often are treated, not only unfairly, but often with cruel vengeance. The book also holds appeal to the medico-legal profession. We are in deep moral trouble in US Medicine. Dr Cundiff's book proves that. He doesn't show us a complete way out. But we need to be inspired by his incredible courage to speak out as well as his persistence and remarkable moral and physical stamina to remain "in the good fight". Dr. Rick Lippin Southampton, Pa

This exposé, Whistleblower Doctor-The Politics and Economics of Pain and Dying, concerns Dr. David K. Cundiff's efforts over 32 years to improve the quality of palliative care and hospice services for cancer and AIDS patients at the LA County + USC Medical Center. Over a nine year period, he improved the care of terminally ill cancer and AIDS patients at the LA County + USC Medical Center by directing a popular "Pain and Palliative Care Consultation Service." Unfortunately for the financial bottom line of the hospital, better pain and symptom control of terminally ill patients led to more patients at home and fewer patients occupying Medicaid-funded hospital beds. The unintended consequence of Medicaid's dysfunctional hospital-centric funding system was the closure of Dr. Cundiff's Consultation Service in 1995. Dr. Cundiff subsequently blew the whistle by writing 83 incident reports about patients receiving poor pain and symptom management. He also wrote an op-ed piece in the LA Times about poor palliative care and widespread institutionalized inefficiencies due to dysfunctional Medicaid financial incentives rewarding a higher hospital census. The hospital retaliated by firing Dr. Cundiff, and the California Medical Board revoked his medical license, both supposedly over a single clinical treatment decision. In a patient with alcoholism, liver failure, and a deep venous thrombosis (DVT, leg vein clot), Dr. Cundiff stopped anticoagulant medications because of the high risk of serious bleeding. Unfortunately, the patient later died of thromboses in his lungs (pulmonary emboli). This reasonable judgment call was not the real reason the Medical Board revoked Dr. Cundiff's license. He challenged the institutionalized inefficiencies in charity hospitals spawned by Medicaid. In researching the scientific evidence regarding anticoagulant drug treatment of venous thromboembolism (VTE: deep venous thrombosis and pulmonary emboli), Dr. Cundiff serendipitously discovered that these drugs do not reduce the risk of death in these patients. In fact, they increase the chance of dying due to bleeding and rebound hypercoagulability (increased clotting after stopping anticoagulants). Up to 20,000 Americans die unnecessarily each year due to bleeding and rebound clotting from these drugs for prophylaxis and treatment of VTE. While many bleed to death or suffer major nonfatal bleeding, drug companies and medical special interests earn from \$17 - \$25 billion per year in the U.S. from unnecessary and harmful anticoagulation treatments. Dr. Cundiff's peer-reviewed medical journal publications challenging anticoagulant treatment of VTE have been ignored by drug company funded anticoagulant drug researchers. Federal government health regulators in the FDA and NIH have refused to issue a detailed transparent, public critique of his challenges to the evidence basis of anticoagulation for VTE. Drug company financial clout is killing people. The major goals of this book include: improving the pain and symptom control of cancer and AIDS patients, stopping the epidemic of deaths and injuries from the use of anticoagulant drugs, changing the Medicaid reimbursement system for the LA County Department of Health Services and other places where it fosters inefficiencies and poor medical care, and reinstating Dr. Cundiff's medical license.