

Health Systems and the Challenge of Communicable Diseases: Experiences from Europe and Latin America (European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies)

Richard Coker, Rifat Atun, Martin McKee



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"This is an excellent book, well-written and well-documented. The editors have succeeded to bring together a large number of knowledgeable authors to cover comprehensively the vast area ... public health actors dealing with infectious diseases both at central and local level, whether in research, teaching or practice as well as professionals working in diagnostic and therapeutic health services, notably in microbiology and infectious diseases could greatly benefit from reading the book. Politicians and lay administrators with responsibility in the field would be well advised to do the same." European Journal of Public Health

Health systems everywhere face constant change as they seek to respond to evolving patterns of disease. This is especially true with communicable diseases where humanity is engaged in a constant evolutionary struggle with micro-organisms that are able to adapt rapidly to a changing world. This problem can be, for example, exemplified recently by the growth of antibiotic resistant infection.

This fascinating book confronts this challenge, looking at two regions where the pace of change is especially rapid, Europe and Latin America - places where health systems, many themselves undergoing rapid organisational transition, must find ways of adapting to an ever changing context.

The book begins with an historical overview, recalling how humans and micro-organisms have always competed, at times with profound historical consequences, before examining the current status of this evolutionary struggle. It assesses the extent to which human societies and their governments are prepared for the challenges ahead and reviews the experiences of countries in Europe and Latin America in developing effective responses.

Health Systems and the Challenge of Communicable Diseases will be of interest to those engaged in the development of health policy in high and middle income countries, and to those who are studying the creation and implementation of health policy.

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