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Professions, People and Markets: Tradeoffs in Medical Care Reform

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Medical care reform throughout the world focuses on increasing “market” influences on the “production” and “distribution” of services. In this paper we explore the tradeoffs in these reforms by first distinguishing three modes of organizing medical services: professional, democratic, and market. Dimensions of each mode are described. Decision making in medical care is divided into spheres – delivery, organization, and finance – with different modes characteristic of each sphere in most countries. With this background, the costs and benefits of moving to a market model are explored, concluding that there is no reason to be cautious about the market.

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