

Preface

This book is a collection of contributions by a group of scholars who collectively provided a paradigmatic shift in thinking about health systems complexity for the challenges of the twenty-first century. This book is less about abstract possibilities and esoteric techniques and more about understanding the dynamics of complex systems as they pertain to health and healthcare. Through agent-based modeling, system dynamics modeling, various directions of approach, and different methodologies, we believe we have improved understanding in a wide range of health settings at critical encounters with complexity. We are hopeful that this collection will provide a synergy that can leverage a new level of understanding in order to theorize and empirically explore the emergent and process nature of complexity across levels of analysis that foster insights into dynamic systems. Furthermore, we hope to encourage further theoretical and empirical research that perhaps may be interwoven by the works presented herein, and in advancing new methodological perspectives to include multilevel and cross-level analysis.

Many challenges lie ahead, predominantly as we move towards displacing traditional thinking founded in rationality and based on either-or decisions, to one where plural logics coexist under conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity. Our aim here has been to focus our attention on the whole and its interrelationships. The contributions to this book, embedded in contemporaneous and historical contexts, turn our attention to the unfolding processes of dynamic complexity as agents interact under conditions of multiplicity. It is our hope that this book will stimulate a new way of thinking as a proclamation of a new era of resource constraints.



<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-55773-1>

Innovative Healthcare Systems for the 21st Century

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2017, XVIII, 341 p. 101 illus., 81 illus. in color.,

Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-55773-1