Doctors in Denial analyzes the controversial relationship between the Canadian medical profession and the pharmaceutical industry. Health care policy expert Joel Lexchin shows how doctors and medical groups have been captured by Big Pharma since the early 1950s and he documents the toxic consequences of this relationship and how it has affected – and continues to affect – health care in Canada.

The ongoing affiliation has had a direct impact on key issues over the past six decades including advertising in medical journals, industry-funded research done in hospitals, direct-to-consumer prescription drug promotion, medical student training, and regulation of pharmaceuticals in Canada. Lexchin – an emergency physician who has been an active participant in many of the events he describes – explores conflict-of-interest dilemmas for many in the medical community and addresses especially the conduct of individual Canadian doctors faced with how to ethically approach the gifts, drug samples, trips, and dinners that they receive from drug companies.

Efforts to control this dangerous relationship have been unsuccessful. Although Lexchin says the government does have a role to play in changing the nature of the relationship, he argues that the burden rests with the medical community. Doctors in Denial encourages medical professionals to see past the lure of Big Pharma and use medicine for the benefit of their patients and society.

JOEL LEXCHIN is an internationally-recognized expert in pharmaceutical policy. He received his MD from the University of Toronto in 1977 and has spent over thirty years working as an emergency physician in Hamilton and Toronto. From 2001 to 2016, he taught health policy at York University and is a Professor Emeritus in the School of Health Policy and Management at York. He has been an advocate for change in pharmaceutical policy for thirty-five years, has appeared before numerous parliamentary committees, and has authored or co-authored over 150 articles about all aspects of how medicines are developed and used.

Doctors in Denial
Why Big Pharma and the Canadian medical profession are too close for comfort

Joel Lexchin
ISBN 9781459412385
Paperback, $25.00 CAD
Publication: May 1, 2017

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