



LOWN
INSTITUTE

THE LOWN INSTITUTE'S GROUNDBREAKING RIGHT CARE SERIES IN *THE LANCET*

A Boston-based, non-profit think tank, the Lown Institute is dedicated to exposing the deep-rooted, pervasive failures and injustices in health care and articulating a vision for a better system. In the United States and around the world, health systems are failing to provide the care patients need (often called underuse) while also wasting resources and endangering patients with unnecessary medical interventions (overuse). With the *Lancet Right Care Series*, the Lown Institute has launched a global effort to assess the scope of overuse and underuse and to place these twin failings of health care systems everywhere at the center of health strategies to achieve the right care for all people.

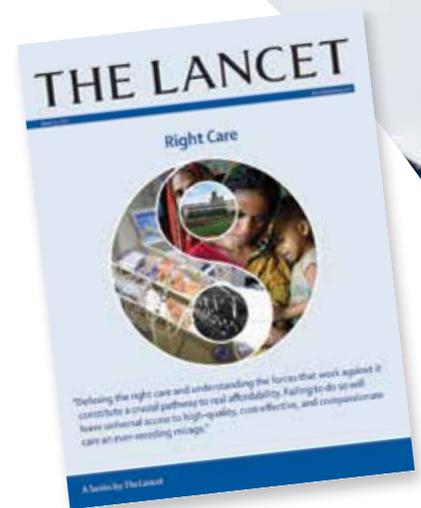
The Series is an urgent call to action for health ministers, policymakers and health providers to focus on these failings, to weed out unnecessary care, and to provide effective, appropriate care to their citizenry.

THE SERIES ORIGINS

Following the Lown Institute's *Avoiding Avoidable Care Conference* in 2012—the first major medical conference in the world on the topic of overuse—*The Lancet* editors and Lown Institute leadership began discussions that led to the Right Care Series. The Institute organized a team of 27 international experts from nine countries and 21 institutions. Lead authors from the Lown Institute are **Vikas Saini, MD**, president, **Shannon Brownlee, MSc**, senior vice president and **Adam Elshaug, PhD**, senior fellow and professor at the University of Sydney, Australia. **Paul Glasziou, FRACGP**, of Bond University, Australia, led a fourth paper.

Heralded as “stunning scholarship” by Don Berwick, MD, former administrator of the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the Series consists of four papers and three commentaries:

- Overuse around the world
- Underuse around the world
- Drivers of poor care
- Policy levers for improving care
- Commentaries from the lead authors, *The Lancet* editors, and Dr. Berwick



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THE ENORMITY OF OVERUSE AND UNDERUSE

Overuse and underuse are ubiquitous, occurring in both rich and poor countries, and often afflicting individual patients at the same time. Some of the findings:



More than 6 million

unnecessary Caesarean section deliveries are performed each year, half of them in Brazil and China



In 29 countries, 48% of women

who are in preterm labor do not receive appropriate antenatal steroid treatment, which would substantially reduce pre-term infant mortality



Around the world, more than 500,000 cases

of thyroid cancer have been over-diagnosed, leading to high rates of unnecessary treatment



Across Africa, more than 40% of patients

with advanced cancer do not have access to opioids to manage their pain



30% of colonoscopies

performed in the U.S. are inappropriate, seriously harming at least 10,000 patients annually

Lead authors Saini, Brownlee, Elshaug and Glasziou call for active public education, public engagement, and empowerment to ensure that the forces that shape health care delivery worldwide are truly focused on delivering the right care; and that delivery systems are properly scaled and adapted to local needs and socioeconomic conditions.

DISTINGUISHED RECOGNITION

In his commentary, Dr. Berwick argues that the Series “constitutes a call-to-arms to improve health care globally by better matching care to needs, and practice to science.” *The Lancet* editors, Richard Horton and Sabine Kleinert, call for global health leaders “to recognize the opportunity to eliminate poor care and provide right care as the answer to truly and sustainably achieve healthy lives and wellbeing for all.”

WIDESPREAD MEDIA COVERAGE

The series attracted media attention across the globe, including Greece, Australia, Italy, China, the UK and the U.S. The *BBC*, *Reuters*, *The Nation (Pakistan)*, *HealthLeaders Media*, *Medscape*, *Science Daily* and many others are among the coverage, reaching millions of consumers.

The Series was launched online and at a symposium in London in early January 2017 and will be published in the journal by the end of the year.