“There is a difference between health and health care. Although access to quality care is important, the reality is that there are many factors that impact health. Dr. Lemstra comprehensively reviews the evidence and clearly articulates the need to incorporate behavioural and social interventions with medicine in order to prevent disease and provide better care. Not only will this significantly improve health outcomes, but it will have a meaningful impact on rising costs as well. This book provides valuable insight to both policy makers and the public at large.”

The Honourable Roy Romanow, P.C., O.C., Q.C.,
Premier of Saskatchewan (1991-2001)
Royal Commissioner on the Future of Health Care in Canada (2001-2002)

“As Saskatchewan citizens celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare in our province we now have a thought provoking book that shows us the path we must take to ensure the future of our publically funded healthcare system. Dr. Lemstra’s book is a gift to the next generation of policy makers who understand policy must be made on the basis of evidence. The evidence is clear. Investments in poverty reduction, education, affordable housing, early learning and child care and decent jobs improve health outcomes. Let’s hope this book finds its way to our present day policy makers.”

The Honorable Pat Atkinson, BA, BEd
Minister of Social Services (92-93), Education (93-98), Health (98-01), Advanced Education and Employment (02) and Finance (07) among other portfolios
Government of Saskatchewan Member of Legislative Assembly (1986-2011)

“What an impressive and important undertaking. Mark Lemstra has given us a serious and comprehensive analysis of what we must do to ensure the sustainability of our most cherished social programme. He demonstrates that a singular focus on cost-effective health care will not get us there, although he provides excellent suggestions for better value for health care dollars spent. He makes the compelling case that without a focus on poverty and social inequality and all the determinants of health, health care costs will continue to rise. We want more health and need less health care. ‘Saskatchewan Health’ is a fitting tribute to Tommy Douglas’ reminder of: ‘Let’s not forget that the ultimate goal of Medicare is to keep people well rather than just patching them up when they get sick.’”

The Honorable Carolyn Bennett, MD
Canada’s Minister of State for Public Health (2003-2005)
Member of Parliament (2000 – current)

“There are many reasons to be enthusiastic about Dr. Lemstra’s valuable and provocative new book, Saskatchewan Health. First, it is fact based. In an era when governments too often root their decisions more in ideology than evidence, this book is a useful reality check. Second, it drives home the vital importance of the many social and cultural determinants of physical well-being which have never been adequately targeted. And third, it hails from Saskatchewan, the birthplace of Medicare. At the beginning of the system’s second half century it is fitting that strong ideas about Medicare’s future should originate from here.”

The Honorable Ralph Goodale, BA, LLB
Canada’s Minister of Finance (2003-2006)
Member of Parliament (1974 1979, 1993 – current)

“Rarely do we find a book, written by a health practitioner, that so deftly diagnoses health care systemic failure, spending on the wrong things, and the need for radical change...For the politically right, center, or left, or for those simply desirous of health care that is affordable and successful, this is the brave and fact based book that truly shows the path ahead.”

The Honorable Senator Hugh Segal, BA, OC
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology
government of Canada (2005 – current)

“Dr. Lemstra clearly articulates the problems facing healthcare in Canada and eloquently outlines a rational approach to what is otherwise an unsustainable ability to meet the health needs of Canadians, a defining character of our society. Until we reignite our collective community spirit and address the issues raised by Dr. Lemstra, the usual self-interests will prevail. It is natural for others to criticize the ideas brought forward in this book, but I have yet to see better alternative ideas emerge in this critical debate. An outstanding read for the thoughtful mind.”

Bill Albritton, MD, FRCPC, PhD
Dean of Medicine (2002-2012) and Professor, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

“I have been a physician in Saskatchewan for over 30 years. I have always been resistant to change because I thought I was doing a good job as I performed within and observed the functioning of the health care system. Mark Lemstra seems to be pushing all the right and sensitive buttons in his book about Saskatchewan Health. He makes an excellent point in that we
need to start changing things soon. It has taken me thirty years to agree with him but I do agree now that physicians prescribe too many drugs, do too many tests, order too many scans and possibly do too many operations. We must start improving our nutrition, get more exercise and use common sense instead of running to the doctor for more tests. For people wanting urgent care, we must improve access to family medicine and specialists for all socioeconomic strata. Mark’s book uses common sense and scientific analysis to show how the health care system must improve, such that costs do not keep skyrocketing and dominating our provincial budgets even more than they have in the past. I hope that health care providers and the people controlling the purse strings will read this book and start using some of the ideas to propagate an improved health care system.”

Roy Chernoff, MD, CCFP
Head of Family Medicine
Saskatoon Health Region

“Well done! By way of this book, Dr. Lemstra has alerted Canadians to the vulnerability of our universally accessible and publically funded health care system which may soon be on fiscal life-support. Dr. Lemstra has astutely diagnosed a number of serious ailments of our defining social program and has offered some realistic, evidence based “medicine”. This book is a “must read” for any Canadian who is interested in improving the health of our citizens and that of future generations.”

Bill Bingham, MD, FRCPA
Head of Paediatrics (2001-2010) and Associate Professor, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

“A remarkable effort done by a superb researcher! Saskatchewan Health is a must read for anyone who wants to understand and improve such a complex and pressing issue as our public health care system. This book represents a gold mine of referenced information focusing on common chronic disorders and public health problems. It will be useful for Saskatchewan readers and other Canadians as well as the scientific public health community at large. Excellent work!”

Raymond Tempier, MD, MSc, FRCPA, FCPA
Head of Psychiatry (2005-2010) and Professor, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

“Dr. Mark Lemstra, one of Canada’s leading thinkers and writers in health policy, has given us an important, evidence-based contribution to addressing health equity and improving health services. Anyone interested in fixing health care and creating a healthy society would be wise to read Saskatchewan Health first.”

Ryan Meili, MD, CCFP
Division Head of Social Accountability and Assistant Professor, College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan

“Thoughtful. Provocative. Compelling. Dr. Mark Lemstra has produced a must-read book regarding the healthcare system, its present day outcomes, and future recommendations for a healthier Saskatchewan.”

John Moraros, MD, MPH, PhD
Director iCAN Research Group and Assistant Professor, School of Public Health
University of Saskatchewan

“Dr. Lemstra provides us with a book that is intelligent, thought provoking and full of valuable recommendations. It advocates for a new and more comprehensive approach to health. It is a must read for anyone interested in effectively addressing the social inequities in health faced by Saskatchewan residents.”

Yelena Bird, MD, MPH, PhD
Assistant Professor, School of Public Health
University of Saskatchewan

“A must read! Dr. Mark Lemstra captures various health issues and their health outcomes in Saskatchewan, and provides a comprehensive eye-opening read which is important to health professionals, researchers and policy makers. It stresses the importance to look deeper into the social and cultural determinants of health, and how they can and do impact the health care system. The dominance of lifestyle related preventable diseases as the most common causes of mortality and morbidity indicates the need of mobilizing resources toward programs that promote healthy eating and adequate levels of physical activity across the lifespan. This book can motivate or encourage both governmental and non-governmental organizations further to consult and collaborate with those working in areas of health and to improve comprehensive and inclusive programs and policy initiatives.”

Hassan Vatanparast, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
University of Saskatchewan
“In addition to a principal duty of care to their patients, health professionals and administrators in the Canadian health care system have an obligation to use publicly-funded resources efficiently and effectively in the pursuit of evidence-informed outcomes for patients. Dr. Lemstra has offered a strong argument that health professionals, and the system in total, are failing in that responsibility.”

David S Hill, Ed.D., FCSHP
Dean and Professor, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
University of Saskatchewan

“On the 50th anniversary of Saskatchewan Medicare, Dr. Lemstra has provided a perceptive, challenging and thought-provoking book on how we can establish equity in the Canadian health care scene. He explains why attention to prevention, health promotion, and social determinants of health can lead to system sustainability. I highly recommend this interesting read.”

Allen Backman, PhD
Assistant Executive Director and Associate Professor, School of Public Health
University of Saskatchewan

“In this book the author continues to make significant contribution to our understanding of important facets of the health care system in Saskatchewan. The book provides a detailed empirically based analysis of the many factors that drive health costs up without necessarily improving outputs or outcomes. The book articulates two major themes for reducing costs and improving health—shifting to the preventative from the curative health care model, and evidence-based decision making in dealing not only with patients but also with the health care delivery and funding systems. The book will be valued by readers who want a synopsis of a wide range of factors and thematic perspectives on issues and options to consider in making the health care system more effective and sustainable. The book is very readable and interesting on many levels, and will be equally appealing to policy analysts and policy activists inside and outside educational and health institutions.”

Joseph Garcea, PhD
Head of Political Studies, College of Arts and Science
University of Saskatchewan

“I have been working within the field of mental health for 35 years. In my opinion, Dr. Lemstra provides very good examples of the socioeconomic determinants of mental health and health in general. The research contained in this book is sound and the recommendations made are evidence based. This book has my full support.”

Carl D’Arcy, PhD
Director of Epidemiology, School of Public Health and Director of Applied Research, Psychiatry
University of Saskatchewan

“The technology advancements in the science of medicine continue to expand and develop at an extraordinary pace over the past three decades. Mark Lemstra’s book on Saskatchewan Health has illustrated some thought provoking insights into the opportunities and challenges regarding the proper utilization of these technological advancements in medicine. Mark’s insights into evidence based practice for the proper utilization of high end / high cost technologies such as CT scans and MRI are excellent examples and opportunities to both improve care and reduce some of the cost escalators in the healthcare system. This book demonstrates the need for administrators and policy makers of the healthcare system to shape the evolution of the public healthcare system through use of clinical evidence and best practice models.”

Corey Miller, RTR, MBA
Director of Practitioner Affairs and Director of Medical Imaging and Nuclear Medicine Services (2002-11)
Saskatoon Health Region

“I have been the Manager of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program and the Chronic Disease Management Program for the past 25 years. Based on my clinical experience, I fully agree with the studies that Dr. Lemstra cites in his book that 82% of heart disease and 91% to type 2 diabetes can be successfully prevented. I also believe that behavioural modifications can be used successfully to treat those with chronic disease already. Although I am a strong supporter of Medicare, I believe it has lost its way. Regrettably, we
spend most of our resources on treating disease and not preventing them. As well, we are in love with the newest technology and want to believe in easy quick fixes. Health is more complicated than that. We cannot talk seriously about health without paying close attention to the determinants of health.”

Rick Stene, BSc
Manager, LiveWell Chronic Disease Management Program
Saskatoon Health Region

“This book will provide hope and encouragement to social workers, educators, and those working in a wide range of human services and public policy. Dr. Lemstra demonstrates that a healthier Saskatchewan will not be achieved through spending more money on medical care, diagnostic testing, or pharmaceuticals. Rather, our collective state of health will be improved by channeling increased public resources to income assistance, creation of good jobs and decent housing, schools and early childhood programs, and social support. This provocative and evidence-based book points us in the direction of more equality and better health, and shows us that we cannot have the latter without the former.”

James Mulvale, PhD, RSW
Associate Dean (2009-2012) and Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Work
University of Regina