

Dan Pelino

Biography



Dan Pelino is an innovator, thought leader and author. He is the co-founder of Everyone Matters, Inc., a social impact enterprise dedicated to ensuring that everyone has the right to dignity and respect, to be who they are without being shamed or demeaned, and to thrive within their own unique individuality.

He worked for IBM for 36 years, leading its Global Healthcare and Life Sciences Business for 10 years. He concluded his career with IBM as the General Manager of the global Government, Healthcare, Education, and Life Sciences business.

Pelino is the co-author of *Trusted Healers: Dr. Paul Grundy And The Global Healthcare Crusade* (September 2019).

He is a regular contributor to the discussion on healthcare, citizen based services and Smarter Cities having

appeared on *CNN*, *Bloomberg*, the *BBC* and other media outlets.

Pelino serves as a moderator and host to the current healthcare debate and is an adjunct professor lecturing on Leadership at his alma mater Western Kentucky University. He also guest lectures at other colleges and universities. He serves on numerous private and public boards.

He resides in Northern Virginia. For more information see: www.everyonemattersonline.com

About Co-Author Bud Ramey

Trusted Healers co-author, Bud Ramey, has written six books, including *The Familiar Physician* (2014) with Dr. Peter Anderson. Five of his titles have been about America's culture. A 1971 Virginia Military Institute graduate, Bud has served in top healthcare public affairs positions for forty years, winning over two dozen awards for excellence in communications (two PRSA Silver Anvil Awards) and for his contributions to regional humanitarian and community efforts. He resides in Coastal Virginia.

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Q&A

Trusted Healers

1. ***Trusted Healers* shows what the state of healthcare is in the world today. You believe it can and should be a whole lot better. Why?** Throughout the world, in developing nations, societies are making strides in healthcare access and the quality of care for all citizens. We have entered the “Age of Healthcare Intelligence” and the dramatic changes this will create in the coming years should be available for all people. We know in America that our healthcare system is challenged. But it is a cultural decision holding us back. We have all the tools we need to solve the problems that we face and as we look at the process for societal change, we see a path to better care for all. *Trusted Healers* is a book of hope, aspiration, and encouragement.
2. **Why do you feel that once people read your book they will never look at healthcare the same way? *Trusted Healers* offers a view of healthcare from the inside. We embark upon a journey with a front row seat to societal change, to new principles of cultural leadership and to a new threshold in healthcare.**

When you read *Trusted Healers*, you will go on a journey of discovery to view healthcare from the inside. You will meet *trusted healers*, healthcare leaders in the US and abroad who are guiding change addressing the difficult questions and providing an aspiration to better care and quality of life.

There are secrets along this journey. Secrets of how cultures make change happen. You will learn that evidence-based medicine is better healthcare and that it should be offered in your community. You will learn about new findings in access, wellness, and empowerment. There are secrets of effective inspired leadership. You will learn about the *Trusted Healers* of the world. And you will realize there is one major decision you need to make right now that will impact your entire life.

3. **How do other nations compare to the US when it comes to delivering quality, accessible healthcare. One of our take-away observations about healthcare in other developed nations is that the most satisfied and content citizens reside in nations that have accepted the belief that Everyone Matters.** Every other developed nation in the world has structured healthcare to not leave anyone out. Include everyone. That’s where they begin their planning. Their costs are much less than the cost structure of healthcare systems in the US. And their citizens are happier not only with their healthcare, but happier people. Rightfully so, many contend that the population of these countries are much smaller than the US (330 million).
4. **What should we import or export when it comes to healthcare?** First, we should notice that we are the only nation in the world that deliberately leaves millions of citizens out of healthcare.

That is a bridge we must cross before we can improve other aspects of care. Usually, this kind of societal flaw comes from a widespread belief that there is not enough to go around. That's a false belief. Look around. Come with us on a journey and we will show you a path – illuminated by evidence and leadership driving the societal change to improve healthcare and healthy living. We should also drive parity of mental and physical health allowing all people a path of access, wellness and empowerment.

5. **What are some of the changes you would like to see in the delivery and access to American healthcare?** Everyone should have a *Trusted Healer* and a medical home to guide them through life, accessible any time needed. Let's ask the question, what happens if we provide robust primary care to everyone? The entire continuum of care we have created in America should be available to everyone. Studies have shown how this will actually cost less than providing the episodic care of over-reliance on hospitals, urgent care centers, and Emergency Departments for routine matters. Focus on the patient team-care models that help us all get in front of disease and emergency visits and address mental and behavioral health for less money seem to be the question worth pursuing.
6. **Why do you believe reducing the age to Medicare to 55 years makes sense – but not have Medicare for all?** We believe transformation guided by the creation of robust primary care, available to everyone, is a solid starting point.

Dr. Ted Epperly, in an interview in *Trusted Healers*, makes a great point. He advocates dropping the eligibility for Medicare to age 50 because the 15 years prior to age 65 are when people usually encounter chronic disease and they face grave danger if they try to wait until they are better insured with Medicare. Or worse, they forego being treated. Our culture needs to make some core decisions about healthcare. "Medicare for All" is one option under scrutiny.

On July 30, 1965, President Johnson signed Medicare and Medicaid into law. (The Social Security Amendments of 1965, Pub.L. 89-97, 79 Stat. 286, enacted July 30, 1965, was legislation in the United States whose most important provisions resulted in creation of two programs: Medicare and Medicaid.)

Trusted Healers notes that societal change can take decades, 40 years on average, for a cultural breakthrough to reach a point where it becomes "what we do" and we decide to continue to build upon it, sustaining the rhythm of change. So now, after these decades of making Medicare and Medicaid a part of our societal structure, we are beginning to accept this system as worthy, and we are weighing options for building upon the current system as opposed to rip and replace.

7. **Your book highlights the accomplishments of a number of leaders in healthcare, particularly Dr. Paul Grundy. Can you tell us of his accomplishments and what he is leading the way for?** No one physician throughout this century has done more to promote patient-centered healthcare than Dr. Paul Grundy. I had the honor of serving with Dr. Grundy at IBM as we tackled the crisis in healthcare around the world. Paul is a brilliant doctor and he spent his life as a diplomat, a doctor, son of missionaries in Sierra Leone, with Nelson Mandela in South Africa fighting HIV/AIDS, and with IBM as Director of Global Healthcare Transformation. *Trusted Healers* is his mantra and he has devoted his life to helping nations reorganize their primary care into the medical home, making possible a *Trusted Healer* for all

citizens. He is perhaps the most decorated physician and certainly one of the most fascinating leaders I have ever met. His story is worth sharing, reading, and admiring.

- 8. You value and champion what you call a “trusted healer,” a caregiver who invests time in getting to know you and helps you make good healthcare decisions as you go through life. So what would that look like?** When we build our healthcare around this bedrock, we all will be empowered rather than subjugated. The rails for this journey of healthcare liberation are already laid. We have some predictions in *Trusted Healers*. We will take you on a tour of the *continuum of care* where the medical system is a tool of the individual; you one day will have the entire continuum of care under your influence and have guidance available at the time of need, all in collaboration with your *Trusted Healer*.

For me, the concept of personal healthcare seemed so simple on its face, but it is so antithetical to how modern medicine has evolved. Paul Grundy’s inspiration is very much an approach with a modern world application of what we know impacts the quality of life.

Paul’s aspiration, his vision, calls for every citizen to have a *medical home*, a delivery model that ensures that we receive the necessary care when and where we need it, in a manner we can understand, by a *Trusted Healer* and care team that invests the time in getting to know us, standing by us over the years—physically, virtually, emotionally, and spiritually.

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- 9. Former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy, in the book’s foreword, demands our nation consciously change the way it cares for mental health issues, the opioid crisis, and the stigma we attach to disease of the brain. What do you propose be done in these areas?**

Well, like every other form of healthcare, we should begin by agreeing to make care available to all citizens. That is not hard to do. Then, within that wonderful inclusive idea, we make sure that mental health care is offered exactly like other aspects of care. Individually, we stop stigmatizing mental health care and diseases of the brain. Just stop it. The brain is an organ like the heart or the lungs and when things go wrong we should not shun talking about it.

- 10. You note, in your interviews for the book with Michael Roizen, MD, an award-winning author, chief wellness officer of the Cleveland Clinic, and co-creator of the *Dr. Oz Show* television program, that a key part to healthcare and wellness comes with prevention and patient responsibility. What can be done to help people help themselves?** A culture needs powerful leaders to listen and who fall in love with the questions, making complex issues understandable. Dr. Roizen is our champion for that.

The brilliance of Dr. Roizen is that he understands that there needs to be an incentive to change behavior that is coupled with a wellness focus. He created a system that offers thousands of dollars in discounts for healthcare plans to the employees of the Cleveland Clinic. The rewards are deeper than just benefiting from exercising, proper diet, and caring for your health. The results of combining incentives and wellness are meaningful. Dr. Roizen has very high participation in wellness programs when the incentives are added to the equation.

A colleague, David Folk, founder of NEXT Integrative Life Sciences is deeply involved in this very subject and watch for major developments in the field of personal responsibility for your own well-being. The secret to changing a culture is revealed in *Trusted Healers*. All change is local. A culture will change at its own pace. A culture needs powerful leaders to listen and who fall in love with the questions, making complex issues understandable. Dr. Roizen is our champion for that.

And Dr. Roizen has revealed another secret. You can help millions of people if you have a platform from which to cheer them on. Thus, *The Dr. Oz Show* and fifteen books translated into three dozen languages around the world. He is a world leader in wellness. *Trusted Healers* shows what the state of healthcare is in the world today. We believe it can and should be a whole lot better.

- 11. You advocate for the creation of a medical home. What exactly is that and why is it vital to healthcare?** The relationship with your healer is intimate. Your healer serves your interests – not an insurance company or hospital. Your doctor’s team success is yours as well. It can be easily proven that better medical decisions result from such a powerful relationship. Under Paul’s vision, Your *Trusted Healer* is part of a team in a 21st century model of primary care called the medical home. The medical home is formed as a clinical team and they know all about you. Your medical home is available when you need it. Your medical home team helps you make good medical decisions and creates a medical partnership based on your needs and how you want to lead your life. Your medical home addresses the full spectrum of healthcare with you – primary care, mental health, and prevention.
- 12. What are the different fundamental models of healthcare delivery displayed in the US – and so any work best?** Healthcare networks that embrace the medical home have created the next generation of excellence in healthcare. They have embraced the *Trusted Healer*. But we still grapple with the volume-based payment model, which we are dismantling brick by brick as we speak. If you are under sixty-five in the United States, you have the Bismarck model [employer sponsored]. If you are employed, you have the Douglas model once you turn sixty-five, as predominate insurance provider [Medicare]. If you are one of the ten million in the Veterans Administration, you have the Beverage model, where the government owns the hospitals [England, Ireland]. If you are poor, or under-insured, you become Medicaid or self-pay, frequently the only form of healthcare available in third world countries. No country in the world has been successful in managing such a healthcare system, including America.
- 13. Why is Denmark so far ahead of the world in primary care development?** Because Everyone Matters in that nation. The Danes and other Scandinavian nations, set out to design a healthcare system that embodies the belief that Everyone Matters. That is a tenant of their culture. They could never deliberately deny healthcare to anyone, for any reason.
- 14. Why do citizens in Great Britain favor their healthcare system so much stronger than others?** This takes us back to the end of World War II. The shattered but victorious nation rebuilt their infrastructure through government channels because that’s really the only way they could do it, and they built it around the GPs. The Brits placed their GP’s or General Practitioners as the most beloved part of their culture. The NHS was then founded on this basis and it has not

changed. They love their GPs. Brits, for the most part, love their universal healthcare, though the nation is now embracing the medical home to solve the problems threatening their GPs.

15. In your book you identify the breakthroughs in quality and healthcare cost at Geisinger Health System. When will these evidence-based practices be adopted in our communities? A key finding of our study of societal change around the world is that all cultural change is local. All healthcare is basically, local. In America, there are many different kinds of healthcare communities with diverse governance, leadership and economics. The revolution in evidence-based medicine is marching across the country. Healthcare is much better, safer and less expensive using these carefully studied protocols.

Like Dr. Paul Grundy championing the medical home around the world, Geisinger and Dr. Steele simply say, “Here is a better way. Better patient outcomes. Higher quality. Lower costs. Let us know when you are ready.” It’s a question every healthcare consumer should be asking healthcare leaders in their community: Not “if” but “when” will you be using evidence-based medicine such as the ProvenCare protocols?