Antitrust Policy in Health Care Markets

Health care costs in the United States are much higher than in other countries. These cost differences can be explained, in part, by a lack of competition. Some markets, such as pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, have elements of monopoly. Other markets, such as health insurance, have elements of monopsony. Markets may also be subject to collusion on prices, such as generic drugs, or wages, such as the nurse labor market. Lawful monopoly and monopsony are beyond the reach of antitrust laws, but collusion is not. When appropriate, vigorous antitrust enforcement challenging anticompetitive conduct can aid in reducing health care costs. This book addresses monopoly, monopsony, cartels of sellers and buyers, horizontal and vertical mergers, and antitrust enforcement through private suits as well as the efforts of the antitrust Agencies. The authors demonstrate how enforcing the antitrust laws can ultimately promote competition and reduce health care costs.

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Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316515204

DOI: 10.1017/9781009099615

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First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Angerhofer, Tirza J. author. | Blair, Roger D. author. | Durrance, Christine Piette, author.

Title: Antitrust policy in health care markets / Roger D. Blair, Christine Piette Durrance, Tirza J. Angerhofer.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2023. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022009514 (print) | LCCN 2022009515 (ebook) | ISBN 9781316515204 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009096492 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009099615 (epub)

Subjects: MESH: Health Care Sector–economics | Health Policy | Antitrust Laws–organization & administration | Marketing of Health Services–methods | United States

Classification: LCC RA410.56 (print) | LCC RA410.56 (ebook) | NLM W 74 `AA1| DDC 362.1068/8–dc23/eng/20220328

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022009514

LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022009515

ISBN 978-1-316-51520-4 Hardback ISBN 978-1-009-09649-2 Paperback

Additional resources for this publication at www.cambridge.org/9781316515204

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

> To my parents, Alex and Nadia, for always believing in me and offering me their love and support. TIRZA J. ANGERHOFER

To Chau and the rest of my family for their love, understanding, and support. ROGER D. BLAIR

To my father, Michael, who inspired my love of economics and whose spirit I carry with me every day. CHRISTINE PIETTE DURRANCE

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Acknowledgments

In writing a book like this one, debts to others pile up quickly. It is extremely difficult to keep track of everyone who has made a positive contribution to our efforts. We hope that we have not missed anyone.

For prior collaboration, we thank Kristine Coffin, Thomas Cotter, Carlos Estrada, Jeffrey Harrison, Jill Herndon, the late David Kaserman, Thomas Knight, John Lopatka, William Page, and Richard Romano. Their influence on our reasoning and our understanding of the law and economics that we have employed is gratefully acknowledged. We have received more direct benefits from Sara Bensley, who was always ready to help with legal research. Devon Myers provided substantive input on several issues involving health care policy and details regarding pharmacy benefit managers and the insulin market. Herbert Hovenkamp contributed his wisdom on several antitrust issues. Last, but certainly far from least, we thank Lena Buonanno for her masterful editorial assistance. If not for her efforts, the book would be even less readable than it is.

None of these wonderful colleagues can be blamed for what follows. In a spirit of collegiality, we have agreed to blame one another for all errors of commission or omission that remain.

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