



Richard Smith

Richard Smith is director of the UnitedHealth Chronic Disease Initiative which is collaborating on a global programme with the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. This is a programme to create centres in the developing world to counter the pandemic of chronic disease (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, chronic respiratory disease, and the cancers caused by smoking, poor diet, and physical inactivity.) The programme is funding centres in China, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Tunisia, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Central America, Argentina, Peru, and the US Mexico Border. The UnitedHealth Group is one of the largest health and wellbeing companies in the world.

Previously he was the chief executive of UnitedHealth Europe, a subsidiary of the UnitedHealth Group that works with public health systems in Europe. Before that he was for 13 years editor of the British Medical Journal and chief executive of the BMJ Publishing Group. Altogether he was 25 years at the BMJ.

Having qualified in medicine in Edinburgh, he began his career working in hospitals in Scotland and New Zealand. He also worked for six years as a television doctor with the BBC and TV-AM and has a degree in management science from the Stanford Business School.

A member of the board of the Public Library of Science and chair of the Cochrane Library oversight committee, he is also the editor of Cases Journal (a journal that aims to publish tens of thousands of case reports a year and gather them in a database), an honorary professor at the University of Warwick, chair of the board of Patients Know Best (a start up that uses information technology to improve doctor patient partnership), a member of the governing council of St George's, University of London, and a member of the UK Panel on Research Integrity in Health and Biomedical Science.

Made a Commander of the British Empire in 2000, he is a manic blogger and Tweeter and comes from a family of comedians and loves making soup, porridge, marmalade, and trouble.