



NEWS / PROFESSION

NBCE Computerization Committee Meets

Editorial Staff

Greeley, COLORADO - On December 9, 2000, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) hosted a meeting of its computerization committee. Co-chairs Vernon Temple, DC, NBCE secretary, and Jerry Blanchard, DC, NBCE treasurer, are leading the committee as they explore computerizing NBCE written examinations.

"We hope to have the Special Purposes Examination for Chiropractic (SPEC) exam available in computerized format soon for state licensing boards to utilize with greater availability, and will progress to evaluate all parts of the exams offered by the NBCE," reported Dr. Temple.

The committee will investigate the costs of computerization and the advantages of scheduling flexibility, quicker reporting, and greater accuracy that can come with computer-based testing.

The committee agreed to thoroughly research the impact that computerized testing would have on state licensing agencies, test administrators, chiropractic colleges and candidates.

"I am delighted to see all the members of the committee working so diligently to make computerization of NBCE examinations a reality," said Dr. Peter Ferguson, president of the NBCE Board of Directors.

The computerization committee will reconvene early in 2001.

Texas Group Sues Blue Cross/Blue Shield for Chiropractic Discrimination

ProviderLAW_{SM} has filed a lawsuit in the District Court of Harris County, Texas against Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Texas. The lawsuit asserts discrimination by HMOs against the chiropractic profession. The suit alleges that the U.S. Constitution and the Texas Insurance Code (Article 21.52) bar Texas-licensed HMOs from discriminating against any specialty.

ProviderLAW contends that for many years providers have been told that Article 21.52 does not apply to HMOs, and that Texas providers cannot use it to fight blatant discrimination against them. ProviderLAW, however, says that its independent research has "unearthed significant information to the contrary."

ProviderLAW was founded by Keith Pendleton in 1997 "to improve the collections rates of health care providers through knowledge, implementation, and enforcement of law."

Editor's note: More information on this lawsuit can be found at
http://www.providerlaw.com/Services/News_Flash/news_flash.html.

Prince Charles Calls for Substantial Funding for Alternative Health Research

The Prince of Wales has called for millions of pounds to be invested in the research of alternative medicine. He deemed the current funding as "pitiful," and is promoting the need for a national strategy for investing in the study of the clinical effects of alternative treatments. The national strategy he speaks of is funding via the UK's National Health Service (NHS).

Writing in *The Times* of London, the prince noted: "With new funding, the Foundation for Integrated Medicine, of which I am the president and founder, could provide a focus to coordinate this strategy; allocate funding; provide a network resource; train researchers; disseminate information; and monitor research development."

Close to 1.6 billion pounds (\$2.395 billion in U.S. dollars) were spent on alternative medicine in the United Kingdom in 2000, yet only eight pence of every 100 pounds of the NHS' research funds (the equivalent of 12 cents for every \$150 U.S. dollars) went toward complementary medicine.

Charles, whose shoulder is on the mend following a riding accident, has been an osteopathic patient, and has tried herbs and aromatherapy for persistent back problems. (*Editor's note: You may recall that Princess Diana was an advocate of chiropractic and visited the Anglo European College of Chiropractic - see www.chiroweb.com/cgi-bin/chirosearch/chirosearch.cgi*).

"If they are proved to work, they should be made more available on the NHS," the Prince of Wales stated.

The Chiropractic Act was initiated in the U.K. in 1994, which led to the formation of the General Chiropractic Council.

NCMIC Declares Dividend for Fifth Consecutive Year

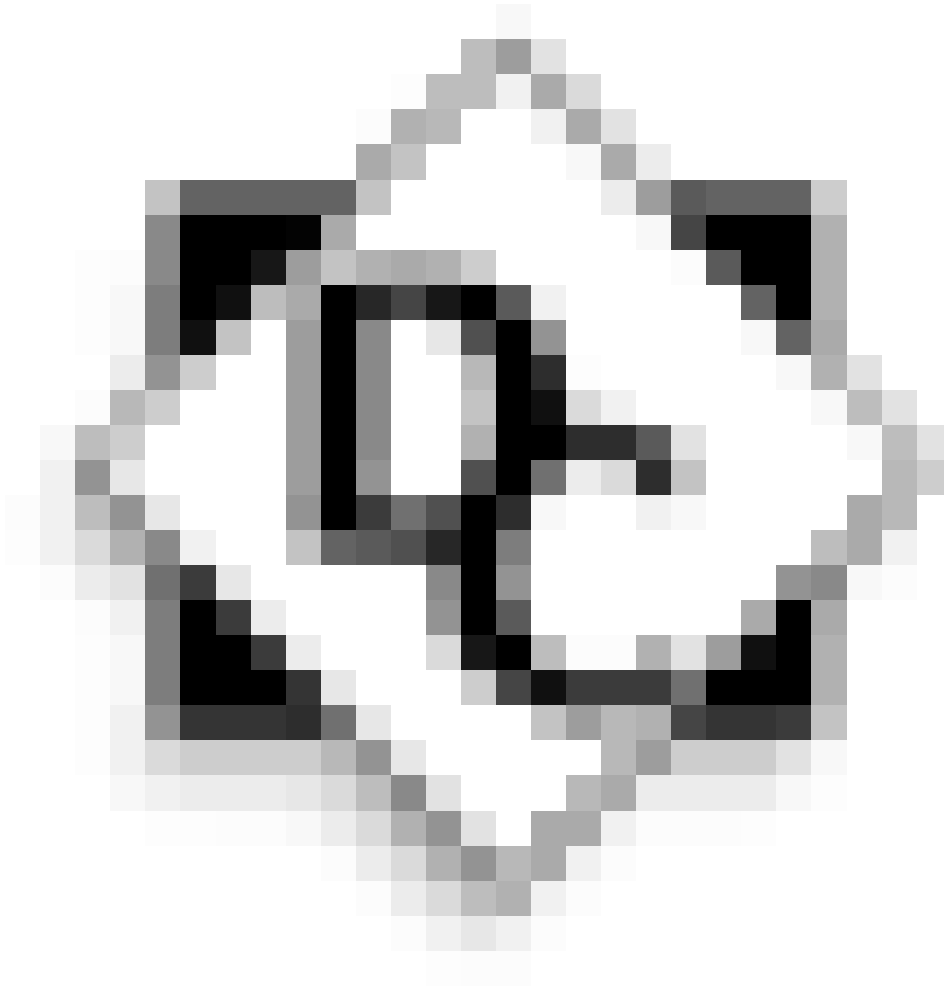
WEST DES MOINES, Iowa - The board of directors of the National Chiropractic Mutual Insurance Company (NCMIC) declared an annual premium dividend for its policyholders, payable on March 19, 2001. This marks the fifth consecutive year NCMIC has issued a dividend.

Calculated on an individual basis, the dividend is based on the length of time a policyholder has been insured with NCMIC and the amount of the insured's premium as of February 28, 2001.

"It's appropriate that as we enter into the year 2001 and celebrate 55 years of service to the profession that we acknowledge our policyholders for their continued support and loyalty,

commented Dr. Louis Sportelli, NCMIC president.

Founded in Webster City, Iowa in 1946, NCMIC provides malpractice protection to more than 28,700 policyholders in the United States.



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