

Something for Everyone: Over 10 Reasons Why We Should All be Part of the Nation's Second Largest Health Organization

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Perhaps you are a regular reader of *Dynamic Chiropractic*. If so, you may have been following the series of columns in recent issues by Drs. Cheryl Hawk, Rand Baird, Monica Smith, myself, and others on chiropractic health care, health promotion, and the organization that helps to tie it all together: the American Public Health Association (APHA). I am going to offer my own list of reasons that we should, as a profession, and as individuals, all participate in the second-largest health-related organization in this country - the APHA.

1. The largest health-related organization in the U.S. is the American Medical Association (AMA). The AMA has its own agenda. It is not an organization that will include chiropractors or support the inclusive of chiropractic issues. There's great power in numbers, so the AMA has a great deal of influence on health issues. That in itself should inspire us to all join the second-largest health organization, APHA, to help swell its numbers to overtake the AMA in size and clout! The APHA welcomes anyone interested in working to improve and protect health and health care.
2. We all want to attend conferences that offer real variety: At the APHA's annual conference, the 12,000 attendees get to choose from over 900 educational sessions, attend a health expo with more than 550 booths, and obtain 18-30 hours of chiropractic continuing education credit!
3. We have been reading a lot lately about health promotion and prevention (HPP). We should play a leading role in this movement. In the APHA, you can meet hundreds of health professionals with similar interests, hear the latest on HPP, and gain opportunities to get involved!
4. Do you want to be a leader in anti-drug efforts in your community? At the APHA's annual conference, you can learn about successful anti-smoking/anti-drug programs while filling your bags with buttons, stickers, brochures and posters to become the most well-armed anti-drug activist in your town! Our group is not afraid to take on the pharmaceutical industry for the good of the people. APHA has been a key force in educating people about the dangers of antibiotic over-prescription and misuse, and warning providers against contributing to this national health care tragedy.
5. Do you want to be involved in injury prevention? In APHA, you can find out what other professions are doing, and share the chiropractic perspective through presentations and networking at conferences, or writing in APHA publications.
6. Are you interested in the health of mothers and children? Any chiropractor with an interest in pediatrics that misses the APHA annual conference misses hearing dozens of talks on maternal and child health care from the perspectives of a variety of health professions.

7. Are you interested in knowing what's hot in occupational health? In the APHA conferences, and publications, you can hear from leaders in the field, and from companies and businesses that deal with workplace safety.
8. Maybe you understand that the crest of the "age wave" is upon us, and that elder care is becoming chiropractic's increasing responsibility. At the APHA annual conference you can rub elbows with a variety of health professionals interested in the care of older adults, and you can also learn about hundreds of services for seniors.
9. Maybe you are a "tree-hugging hippie" like me, and the environment is as important to you now as it was in the 1960s. Take a stand by joining a secondary affiliation in the "environmental health" section of APHA, and learn how the environment and health go hand-in-hand! (Besides membership in the primary Chiropractic Health Care Section of APHA, for only \$5 in additional dues, you can belong to one or more secondary sections).
10. Maybe - just maybe - you would be refreshed by a conference where you were not harangued to buy a series of seminars or expensive chiropractic products and equipment! Perhaps you just want to know what's new on the health care horizon from a the broad, general health standpoint.

APHA convened in Atlanta on October 21-24 with the theme: "one-world global health." The conference included over 10,000 health professionals, business people, patient-rights groups, human rights organizations, and basically anyone with an interest in world health and wellness. In my nearly two decades as a chiropractor, I have never been as energized about being a doctor of chiropractic as I have been at these APHA conferences. The APHA is where the best of this nation's and other nations' health care forces all convene to learn, share, communicate and cross-pollinate. The exposition hall itself dwarfed anything we have ever witnessed in the chiropractic world. (I have learned there's wisdom in bringing an extra suitcase for all the health-related freebies!) It was, as it always has been a truly awesome experience.

The 2002 APHA conference will be held in Philadelphia, November 10-14. Make your plans now to attend this exciting conference. You will not be sorry. (Go to www.apha.org and click on the "annual conference" icon to read more.) It is truly the hottest health-related conference on the face of the planet!

Perhaps yet another conference is not for you. But would you (being the forward-thinking individual you are) want to be a part of the APHA and the hundreds of chiropractors involved formally in APHA, the nation's second-largest health-related organization? Simply join the APHA today. (It's easy! Go to www.apha.org and click on "membership.") Members receive the *American Journal of Public Health* and *The Nation's Health* newspaper free. With these publications, your fingers will be on the pulse of the latest happenings in our nation's health laws, policies, and efforts to improve our nation's health. You will also receive the Chiropractic Health Care Section news, highlighting the accomplishments of one of APHA's youngest but most ambitious sections! Get connected now!

APHA fearlessly takes on issues important to all health care professionals, such as:

- supporting programs for the prevention of obesity and promotion of physical activity;
- addressing the issues of inappropriate and unsafe antibiotic use and genetic modification in our nation's food sources;
- supporting legislation to insure that race, poverty, gender, and ethnicity not be factors in

accessing quality health care; and

- protecting the rights of midwives, and promoting and educating people/providers about the health benefits of breastfeeding.

As You Can See, APHA Has Something for Everyone!

Would you like to talk to a human being about the APHA? Please feel free to contact the numbers given below. We look forward to welcoming you to APHA, and to seeing you at upcoming conferences.

If you will be attending your first APHA conference this coming year, please feel free to contact me personally for details on this year's Chiropractic Health Care Section happenings and (nonpublicized) social events.

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