

A Void Where Chiropractic Should Be

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h), Publisher

While we can't help but get excited about the increased exposure chiropractic is enjoying in the media, perhaps we're fooling ourselves. Yes, we cheer when they compliment us and boo when they malign us (e.g., the sitcom "It's Like, You Know"). But isn't there a little more to it?

Why is chiropractic still the target of ridicule? Why are there still so few articles and news segments about chiropractic? Why does only a small percentage of the population seek chiropractic care?

The answer is simple and overwhelming: information. We're not thought of much because compelling information about chiropractic is so scarce. People who are not chiropractic patients don't often hear the word chiropractic, and when they do, it's often in a negative connotation.

The chiropractic profession has yet to become a player in the information age. We watch, listen and read without seeing, hearing or reading about chiropractic. We ask ourselves, "Why not?" The fact that we don't know "why not" is perhaps the most telling point.

In many cases, people don't think of chiropractic until they have back pain; even then, we are but one of several options.

We sometimes take for granted that others know what we know. When a TV sitcom throws a slanderous remark our way, the real culprit is lack of information and understanding.

We each have a role to play if chiropractic is ever going to be a player in the information age. For our part, *Dynamic Chiropractic* has been taking steps to increase the amount of chiropractic information presented to the public. Our website was the first effort. In addition to listing the address of every doctor of chiropractic in the world, ChiroWeb has a special section for consumers. The latest information tells us that over half of U.S. adults are on the internet, and that many of them search for health information. The demand for credible information is one of the reasons why ChiroWeb enjoys an average of almost 6,000 visits each day.

Perhaps the most powerful information we have to share, and certainly the most authoritative, is the current research, much of which points to the value of chiropractic and other forms of alternative care. That is why our second effort was to create the *Chiropractic Research Review (CRR)* monthly newsletter. This publication not only arms you with this powerful information, but includes a free electronic patient version for you to provide to each of your patients. Your patients in turn can pass the information along to their family, friends and coworkers. (For a free copy of the *CRR*, please call 1-800-359-2289 or e-mail providerservices@mpamedia.com.)

Our latest effort involves working with other websites. Because an increasing number of people are getting their information on the web, this is the place to tell them about chiropractic.

We have recently developed a relationship with Healthgrades.com, the most visited health care provider directory website on the internet. They were very interested in putting all U.S. doctors of chiropractic on their site using *Dynamic Chiropractic's* database. They have also provided a way for

their almost 10,000 daily visitors to access over 700 pages of referenced chiropractic information from their site by accessing a special section on ChiroWeb.com. This allows visitors to Healthgrades.com, one of the most trusted health sites on the web, the chance to learn about chiropractic.

But all of these efforts pale in comparison to what 60,000 DCs could accomplish. You and your colleagues see almost one million patients each day! If you could do your part to inform your patients, that would go a long way toward influencing public opinion.

If you supplied them with information they could pass on to their families, friends and coworkers, you would help establish a marketing army for chiropractic. Again, there is power in information.

To win the information war, you must be willing to provide your patients with information every day. Do that, and your community will be mindful of chiropractic. They will know your value and will stand up for chiropractic when it is berated.

We'll continue to do our part. You may not always be aware of our efforts, but you will benefit from them.

There's exciting information to share about chiropractic. Let's not keep it a secret any longer.

JANUARY 2000