

No More Mandatory X-Rays under Medicare

Editorial Staff

In case you missed it in DC or have some confusion about the end to the mandatory x-ray requirement for chiropractic services under the Medicare program, the requirement was removed as of January 1, 2000. The requirement, long considered an unfair financial burden on beneficiaries and an unjustified procedure that caused patients to be unnecessarily exposed to radiation, was placed in Medicare law more than 20 years ago.

In 1997, the Congressional Budget Office estimated the 10-year cost of the x-ray provision at \$1.4 billion.

The removal of the mandatory x-ray requirement was lauded by American Chiropractic Association President James Mertz, DC, DACBR, as "an important step forward for the chiropractic profession." He noted that it would allow "doctors of chiropractic, rather than the federal government, to decide what is best for their Medicare patients."

Sciatica Study Grant for Northwestern Health Sciences University

The Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research and the National Chiropractic Mutual Insurance Company have awarded a \$182,000 grant to Northwest Health Sciences University for a pilot study on chronic sciatica.

The year-long study will use 30 patients, which will provide preliminary information for a full-scale randomized clinical trial. The study includes principal investigator Gert Bronfort, DC, PhD, and co-investigators Roni Evans, DC, and Richard Hills, DC, all members of the Wolfe-Harris Center for Clinical Studies, along with several members of the medical community.

Dr. Evans points out that sciatica is often disabling, accounting for greater treatment costs and more work loss than uncomplicated low back pain. The full-scale trial will compare chiropractic spinal manipulation, epidural steroid injections and self-care advice (minimal intervention) for sciatica.

Greenawalts Inducted into American College of Chiropractic

Foot Levelers, Inc., founder and Chairman of the Board Dr. Monte Greenawalt, along with his son, Foot Levelers' President Kent Greenawalt, were inducted as Fellows into the American College of Chiropractic during the winter commencement ceremonies at New York Chiropractic College in December.

Dr. Richard Carnival, president of the American College of Chiropractic, lauded their "outstanding contribution to chiropractic education and research and their unwavering support for the advancement of the chiropractic profession."

Entering its 48th year of working with the chiropractic profession, Foot Levelers has donated millions of dollars to the chiropractic colleges to help build libraries, expand campus grounds, construct new buildings and offer scholarships to chiropractic students. Its annual license-renewal seminars have benefited the colleges for years. That tradition continues this year. All the proceeds from Foot Levelers' spring series of license renewal seminars will go to the co-sponsoring colleges. The co-sponsoring colleges are: Parker; Cleveland, K.C.; Northwestern; Palmer; and Texas Chiropractic College. For general and registration information, contact Foot Levelers at (800) 553-4860.

Foot Levelers is also in the news for funding the Foot Levelers' Gait Research Program at the New York Chiropractic College. The funding will lead to the creation of the Biomechanics/Gait Laboratory at the college's Seneca Falls campus. The research, which is already in progress, is employing kinematics and kinetics to explore how walking affects the spine and the body. The research may reveal how the body's gait can disrupt chiropractic adjustments and identify ways to help preserve the adjustment.

American Black Chiropractic Association to Meet

The year 2000 convention of the American Black Chiropractic Association (ABCA) is slated for Thursday, September 28 through Sunday, October 1 at the Marriott City Center Hotel in Oakland, California. Convention registration and informational materials will be sent to ABCA. Non-ABCA members who would like to attend should contact Dr. Gloria Niles, at (510) 276-9013, ext. 303.

MLMIC, Princeton Insurance to Merge

Medical Liability Mutual Insurance Company (MLMIC), the nation's second-largest medical malpractice writers, has agreed to merge with The Princeton Insurance Companies, specialty insurers with policyholders in 15 states. The merger creates one of the largest physician/hospital-owned insurance companies in the world. Both MLMIC and Princeton Insurance plan to retain their company names.

ChiroSource Agreement with Physicians' Health

ChiroSource, Inc., based in Clayton, California, has completed an agreement with Physicians' Health of Arizona to allow access to the ChiroSource provider network for both health benefits and workers' compensation plans. Physicians' Health of Arizona represents Marriot employees and Maricopa government employees for industrial injuries, in addition to agreements with national PPOs. ChiroSource maintains the largest chiropractic network in Arizona.

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