

## Overcoming Challenges as a Wellness Practitioner

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Those of us who believe that the body is the best doctor also know that the body tells us when it has a need or an impending problem. When we take a detailed history and our patients are honest with us, we can usually determine what area of the body requires attention and give it what it needs to heal itself. Chiropractors are concerned about detecting the level of subluxation and correcting it, thus giving the body an opportunity to work at its optimum level. In this article, we will examine some of the challenges facing the wellness practitioner.

One major challenge is the lack of patient understanding of health and wellness. As a nation, the medical community and pharmaceutical industry have generated a "sickness" mentality. This attitude makes patients and establishment physicians insensitive to early signs and symptoms of decline. Seldom does any patient have a sudden crisis without multiple warnings from the body, which are often ignored.

We must train our patients, the lay public and even the medical community in matters of health and wellness. You can educate your patients with literature; you can present seminars for the general public in your area; and you can send information packets on chiropractic and your office to local medical practitioners, especially those who you have heard to be openminded about health and wellness care.

Be more concerned about care for your patients instead of their specific diagnosis. Chiropractors are better able to generate a proper health attitude in the community where they practice. Regular health and wellness seminars can certainly go a long way in changing attitudes and misinformation.

The general medical community and third-party payers in the areas in which we practice are the greatest deterrents to health-oriented patients and honest health and wellness care. This begins at the top in medical circles, so it is unlikely that this attitude will change anytime soon. The best we can hope for is tolerance on the part of most crisis care practitioners. Some younger physicians are more open-minded or economically motivated to listen to information and become "health-oriented." Their willingness to work with wellness practitioners can be nurtured if they can enter into an integrative health care network with a local chiropractor, especially if they share patients. Third-party payers must listen to practitioners instead of being controlled by the attitudes and opinions of their medical directors.

The third challenge wellness practitioners face is that many patients who come to us already have multiple organ complaints. Also, many of these people have already been treated by medical doctors and the water has been muddied by pharmaceutical preparations and chemicals. Some of the medications may have created more problems than they helped. Even more problematic is a medication that the body has become dependent on.

Many of these patients have come to you from the general medical community because they are fed up, frustrated and looking for help. As a wellness practitioner, you must explain that it takes time

for the body to recover; that healing requires patience. Vertebral subluxation correction is a process, and handouts pertinent to this and the healing crisis will help. If these patients experience some improvement early on, it will help you reposition these patients from the "quick-fix" mentality to the "wellness" mode.

Train and encourage your patients to take responsibility for their health. As they improve and experience optimum health, they will find a way of living that minimizes the use of prescription drugs and is more fulfilling.

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