

We Get Letters & E-Mail

Weekend Naturopathic Schools "Cheapen the Title of Naturopath"

Dear Editor:

I am concerned to see an advertisement for a weekend naturopathic school on page 22 of the June 26, 2000 issue of *Dynamic Chiropractic*. This school offers a 16-month, one-weekend-per-month program to become a "naturopathic practitioner/doctor." Upon perusing their website, I discovered that this program is open not only to licensed doctors, but also to anyone who completed the school's "holistic health practitioner" program - a five-day seminar.

Naturopathy is currently a small but growing profession licensed in 11 states. Chiropractic struggled for licensure in the 20th century; naturopathic is in the same position today. Weekend programs and correspondence schools cheapen the title of naturopath, leaving it open to contempt in the professional community and confusion in the mind of the public.

Some of these schools oppose naturopathic licensure, preferring to keep low standards so that graduates can practice as naturopaths, or even "doctors" of naturopathy, without going through a true professional doctorate education. The push for licensure in naturopathy is a good thing. The reader is referred to the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (<http://www.naturopathic.org>) or the Alliance for the State Licensing of Naturopathic Physicians (<http://www.allianceworkbook.com>).

I would encourage chiropractors who are interested in expanding their knowledge of natural medicine to consider other options. The American Board of Chiropractic Internists and the American Chiropractic Board of Nutritionists offer postgraduate diplomas in similar subject areas. The chiropractor who is serious about becoming a doctor of naturopathy (ND) should matriculate in a full-time program at Bastyr University in Washington, the National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Oregon, Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine in Arizona, or the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM) in Ontario. These are the only schools currently accredited (CCNM is a candidate for accreditation) by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education, a body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education (much like the Council on Chiropractic Education).

I'm sure most chiropractors would be upset about a weekend program offering the title of "chiropractor" to people after less than 200 hours of training. We should support high standards and credibility of wellness-oriented health care by rejecting weekend or correspondence naturopathic degrees.

Andrew Peters,DC
Appleton, Wisconsin

"ASHP and Landmark do little more than take money from those doctors that earn it."

Dear Editor:

American Specialty Health Plans now pays the providers \$24 or \$29 per office visit, depending upon the co-pay involved and one re-exam every 60 days, even though a re-exam is required to get authorization for additional treatment prior to that 60 day period. Landmark Healthcare pays the providers \$14, \$19 or \$24 per visit, depending upon the co-pay involved, does not pay for exams or re-exams, yet requires them for authorization beyond the eight-treatment waiver.

So, this is what it has come to: taking whatever is left over after they have made their millions. There are high-school-educated blue-collar workers making more money than professionally educated chiropractors.

If chiropractic chooses to enter the managed care field, why not deal directly with the managed care companies? We don't see the medical profession allowing an ASHP or Landmark to position themselves between the doctor and insurance company and taking the doctors' money for doing little more than shuffling paper. We don't see medical doctors doing boring, redundant paperwork for routine office visits or accepting insultingly low payment for their services. These insurance companies have built in limits on chiropractic visits and reimbursement to avoid abuse. ASHP and Landmark do little more than take money from those doctors that earn it. It is time for the chiropractic profession, led by the state organizations, to negotiate directly with the managed care companies and eliminate those companies getting fat off the labor of the field doctors.

Anonymous in California

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