

Report from the World Federation of Chiropractic

Editorial Staff

Australia

In June 1997, the Trade Practices Act (TPA) was extended to cover anti-competitive practices by health professions. It is administered by the Australian Commission on Competition and Consumer Affairs (ACCC). On a complaint from the Chiropractors Association of Australia (CAA), the ACCC has accepted that the Australian Medical Association (AMA) is in breach of the TPA. Although the AMA has removed written policies against chiropractic from its books, it is still limiting its members from cooperating with chiropractors by acting as if ethical restraints exist. (See "Australian Medical Association Taken to Task," *DC*, Jan. 26, 1999.)

The ACCC has had two meetings with the AMA and is now requiring the AMA to take several steps to publicly remove its opposition to chiropractic within six months, failing which the ACCC will take legal action. Two million dollars have been put aside for this purpose and the ACCC has the capacity of imposing a penalty of up to \$10 million. All of this is similar to the Wilk case in the U.S., except that it is a government agency that is promoting and funding the litigation.

There are two items of good news. The Queensland government has provided funding for Dr. Lynton Giles and his spinal research center at James Cook University. It is the first public funding for chiropractic education and research in that state.

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology was honored with the prestigious 1998 "Australian Export" award in the field of education. RMIT has campuses throughout Asia, and "exports" education in many fields, including chiropractic. RMIT became a finalist after winning the "Governor of Victoria Export" award for education last October. The national award was presented at a ceremony in Sydney on December 1 by Tim Fischer, deputy prime minister and minister for trade.

Canada

The new president of the Canadian Chiropractic Association (CCA), the WFC's second largest member (more than half the size of the American Chiropractic Association), is Dr. David Leprich of St. Catharines, Ontario. As part of a recent fees agreement between the Ontario government and the Ontario Chiropractic Association, the biggest provincial division of the CCA, the government will provide \$2.25 million during the next year for chiropractic research. \$1.25 million will go for a tension-type headache trial comparing chiropractic, medical and combined management. The Principal investigators are Dr. Howard Vernon (CMCC) and Dr. Gwen Janz (University of Toronto and St. Michael's Hospital). The other one million dollars, and this may be a good idea to pursue in your jurisdiction, is an available fund for projects that might arise.

There is often agreement by all parties for an interdisciplinary project which would include chiropractic services, but chiropractic is not included because funding is not available. In Ontario, for example, the government is about to begin pilot projects in reformed primary care sites. This

research money will be available for services in community health centers, hospitals and other settings where chiropractic services are generally not included.

British Virgin Islands

Many jurisdictions in the West Indies have only one or two chiropractors. For the past several years, Ron Hash, DC, formerly a faculty member at Life University, has been the only chiropractor in the British Virgin Islands for its 18,000 inhabitants. Ron reports he's "comfortably busy" with a main clinic on Tortola and part-time clinics on other islands which he reaches travelling on his own boat. Send him a supportive e-mail welcome at chiron@caribsurf.com.

Denmark

The Danish Chiropractors' Association (DCA), like the Canadian Chiropractic Association, negotiates with the government for money for research and postgraduate education. Denmark now has a higher percentage of chiropractors who have basic science doctorates and are engaged in research than any other country.

The WFC arranged for the attendance of Niels Nilsson, DC, MD, PhD (Denmark) at the annual meeting of the Cochrane Collaboration in Baltimore in October. This was possible from the funding support from the Canadian profession through the Canadian Chiropractic Protective Association (CCPA). Dr. Nilsson then invited Gert Brontford, DC, PhD, a fellow Danish researcher now with Northwestern College of Chiropractic in Minneapolis. In a development likely to have far reaching consequences in the years ahead, the Cochrane Collaboration has invited Dr. Nilsson and Dr. Brontford to now lead a new review team on conservative management of headaches. Congratulations to the DCA, CCA, CCPA and Northwestern, and of course to Dr. Nilsson and to Dr. Brontford.

Honduras

Dr. Bruce Kniegge, president of the Honduran Chiropractic Association, is testimony to the adventures of practicing chiropractic in Honduras. (See "Mission Chiropractor Shot by Gunmen in Honduras," *DC*, Feb. 23, 1998.) Undeterred by the loss of an eye to a gunshot wound a year ago, he returned to full-time practice in time to meet Hurricane Mitch. Dr. Kniegge, who is safe and well, reports firsthand accounts of the devastation we have read about in the newspapers, including his momentous trip to the nearest city as highways and bridges he passed over were swept away within minutes or hours. Dr. Kniegge can be reached by e-mail at bakdr@hondutel.hn.

Japan

As already reported, an historic merger is underway with Japan's 70 formally qualified doctors of chiropractic forming a new Chiropractors Association of Japan (JAC) under the leadership of President Dr. Hirofumi Nakatuka and Vice President Dr. Yozo Kawanishi. The JAC's new constitution is significant because it places clear ethical restrictions on the activity that has caused so many difficulties in Japan in the past: the teaching of short-term courses in chiropractic by chiropractors to laypersons. The preliminary merger agreement was signed in Tokyo, October 11, 1998, and followed a conference the previous day at which chiropractic leaders signed the following important policy statement:

The document for the chiropractic educational standards for Japan reads:

Whereas the chiropractic profession has not previously agreed upon appropriate minimum standards of education, but now wishes to do so, And whereas all leaders in chiropractic education in Japan have been invited to a consensus meeting today for this purpose, And whereas this meeting has produced a consensus agreement, Now therefore it is agreed by the undersigned parties:

1. That henceforth, people entering education to become chiropractors in Japan should only do so through a program which operates at or is in the process of achieving the international standard.

2. That within 5-8 years, all locally trained chiropractors working in Japan should have obtained a minimum level of education at or equivalent to a first university degree in chiropractic.

That no new chiropractic programs should commence in Japan unless they begin immediately at the level of the international standard.

Libya

In October, the WFC sent technical materials to Dr. Gamal Giroush, the sole chiropractor in Libya. He is seeking official recognition for the chiropractic profession. Dr. Giroush, a 1987 Palmer graduate, had his degree approved by the Libyan Medical Association in 1989, as required by the ministry of health. He has a well-established practice with good support of the government and medical profession. He has made unsuccessful efforts to have other chiropractors join him. The problem is not one of immigration, but that chiropractors are unable to remit any funds out of Libya because of the country's exchange controls. Anyone interested in a pioneering chiropractic experience may contact Dr. Giroush at the Abouharida Clinic of Chiropractic; tel 218-21-444-2364; fax 218-21-462-2652.

Taiwan

In October/November, a Los Angeles-based Taiwanese physician, Dr. Stephen Tsai, representing "informally trained" chiropractors in Taiwan, approached Los Angeles College of Chiropractic and Western States College of Chiropractic requesting short-term continuing education courses for those "chiropractors" in Taiwan. Congratulations to both LACC (Dr. Schultz) and Western States (Dr. Bill Dallas) for checking credentials, consulting with the WFC and then refusing to offer services in the interest of the profession and the Taiwan Chiropractic Association.

The results were immediate. Dr. Tsai next contacted the WFC, agreed to follow its policies and direction, and is now contacting the TCA in Taiwan concerning the next steps. In Taiwan, as in many other countries, most recently the U.K., the government will recognize informally trained chiropractors who have been in practice for a period of years when licensing legislation is passed. The goal is to cooperate with the leaders of the informally trained chiropractors, but only to provide further education in the context of a full conversion degree program. This should be offered by a local university in partnership with the national association (here the TCA), and a recognized chiropractic college. The partners in this educational venture will be the TCA, Fu Jen Catholic University, RMIT University, Australia, and consultants from LACC. Representatives of all these organizations were at the WFC's educational conference in Manila. The goal is to establish a full undergraduate chiropractic program at Fu Jen University.

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