

## Alliance Unveils 1999 Media Campaign

FEBRUARY 2000 WILL BE "CHIROPRACTIC AWARENESS MONTH"

Editorial Staff

Arlington, VA -- The Alliance for Chiropractic Progress (Alliance), with a budget of just \$800,000 for advertising and marketing, was able to educate millions of people about chiropractic with full-page color ads in three magazines: *Prevention* (the nation's number-one consumer health publication), *Consumer Digest* and *Health*.

The Alliance also had a three-page booklet in the April and September issues of *Prevention*; and there was the presentation of the "Community Health Service" awards to six chiropractors from six geographical regions of the U.S., with regional coverage in *Prevention*.

The Alliance's first-year campaign registered more than 61 million "impressions" in a target market of people most likely to respond to chiropractic. ("Impressions" is marketing parlance. One impression is one person seeing the message one time.)

Were the Alliance's time, money and energy worth the effort? The results of the Alliance's efforts to educate the public were immediate and dramatic, according to *Prevention's* research department. Before the media campaign began, *Prevention* surveyed readers to determine their knowledge of chiropractic. Only 24% of those who took the survey knew the level of education required to become a DC; only 51% understood what it takes to open a chiropractic practice; and only 65% knew that chiropractors don't prescribe drugs or surgery.

When *Prevention* surveyed its readers after the campaign, however, the responses showed significant gains in all three areas. These results showed the Alliance's detractors that chiropractic advertising could educate the public and affect the way people view the profession.

"Yes, It's Time for a Chiropractor"

With a year of media experience, the Alliance is gearing up for its 1999 campaign. The Alliance will launch the second year of its national marketing campaign with a multifaceted campaign to show why chiropractic is an effective form of health care, while appealing to the public's increasing willingness to seek "alternative" health care. The media slogan will be: "Yes, It's Time for a Chiropractor."

"The time is right for a united chiropractic profession to tell its story," declared Dr. Carl Cleveland III, the national spokesperson for the Alliance. "Chiropractic care is a rapidly growing field that the public is turning to in increasing numbers. It's our obligation to provide consumers with accurate information about chiropractic as a health care choice."

Integrating Public Relations and Advertising

Once again, advertising in *Prevention* will remain a key part of the Alliance campaign. The plan is to run full-page, full-color ads in *Prevention*, along with special booklet inserts. The booklets will also be reprinted separate from the magazine and made available for use by local chiropractors.

In conjunction with paid advertising, the Alliance is branching out on a comprehensive public relations program to capitalize on the trend in alternative health care.

"In 1998 alone, more than 1,100 articles were written on the subject of alternative health care," noted Dr. Robert Braile, the ICA representative on the Alliance steering committee. "It's a hot topic and one that the field of chiropractic deserves a voice in. An ongoing public relations effort is critical to ensure that the chiropractic point of view is fairly and accurately represented, as well as to initiate stories that are positive toward chiropractic."

As part of the public relations program, the Alliance will distribute quarterly news releases on topics such as family health, sports and senior care. These releases will be sent to hundreds of newspapers, network TV affiliates, consumer health and women's magazines, and select national television programs across the country. There will also be two releases produced and distributed in audio and video formats for the convenience of broadcasters nationwide.

The 1999 media campaign will be followed in February 2000 with "Chiropractic Awareness Month." The month-long observance is intended to create a surge of media attention about chiropractic and will include opportunities for participation by individual doctors of chiropractic, their patients, chiropractic associations and government officials.

"The participation and support of DCs are critical to our success," asserted Dr. Edward Maurer, an Alliance steering committee member from the ACA. "We're providing an invaluable opportunity to not only enhance our chosen profession, but for individual doctors to build their own practices."

To promote local practices, the Alliance will make available marketing materials that are tied in with the national campaign. DCs are encouraged to call 1-800-431-8172 to get their free "Communications Tool Kit," which includes advertising slicks, news releases, a new patient brochure and important "how-to" marketing information.

The Alliance for Chiropractic Progress is a partnership of the American Chiropractic Association, the International Chiropractors Association and the Association of Chiropractic Colleges. It was established in 1997 to promote awareness of the value of chiropractic to consumers across America. For more information on the Alliance, or to make a donation to the Alliance's marketing and advertising campaign, please contact the ACA at 800-986-4636 or the ICA at 703-528-5000.

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