

## The Quiet Chiropractic Majority

### WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU WANT

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With the plethora of vocal minorities in the chiropractic profession, doctors have to wonder if any of them represent or even consider the concerns shared by the majority of DCs in the United States. Do the majority of practicing doctors of chiropractic have a voice? And if so, is it heard?

In the world of U.S. national politics, one group calls itself the "moral majority." Whether the majority of U.S. citizens could be considered "moral" is a completely different discussion, but an attempt to identify who the majority is and what their concerns are is a worthwhile effort in understanding where a group should focus its attention.

Let's take a look at the majority of doctors of chiropractic in the U.S., group we will call the "quiet majority."

Before we try to answer the question, "What do you want?" let's look at who comprises this group:

Basic Demographics - White (95.5%), male (86.7%), not board certified (74.6%).<sup>1</sup>

Under 50 - As the chiropractic colleges have graduated more and more students, the average age of the DC population has been dropping. It is now less than 45 years of age.<sup>2</sup>

Not on the Internet - The number of DCs on the internet is still estimated at less than 40%.<sup>2</sup>

Nonmembers - Only 16% of you belong to a national chiropractic association. Depending on what state we look at, many of you don't belong to a state association either.

Nonresearch Reader - Based on the subscription levels of the chiropractic research journals, most DCs do not regularly read primary nor secondary research publications.

Unincorporated, Full-Time Private Practitioner - Most DCs in the U.S. are working full time (81.5%) in a single-doctor practice (66%).<sup>1</sup>

Full Spine, Diversified, Mixed Practitioners - Most DCs focus on the entire spine (93.3%), use diversified technique (91.1%) and use a whole host of modalities including: exercise, nutrition, orthotics, electrical stimulation, massage, etc.<sup>1</sup>

So what does all this data suggest?

**FOCUS!**

Beyond the usual demographic data, the majority of DCs are focused on their practice and on their patients. They are more interested in this than they are on reading research, becoming board certified or joining a chiropractic association.

While some may see this as less than optimal (and perhaps even less than professional), this is what's important to most DCs. This is where every chiropractor spends more than 40 hours each week: in their practices caring for patients.

So what kind of message does this send to the rest of the world?

To the chiropractic associations: This data tells them that improving and expanding your chiropractic practice is the most important item on your agenda.

To the patients: They can be assured that they are the most important aspect of your professional life.

To your local politicians: Having access to patients and being able to practice chiropractic as it should be practiced are your top priorities.

To the chiropractic "vocal minorities": You make a very concise statement telling them that they must address these issues to get your attention.

Do you have a voice?

Yes, but only when you decide to use it.

How can you be heard?

By continuing to focus discussions and debates on the issues of chiropractic practice growth and enhancement. Whenever a speaker, politician, chiropractic leader or group goes off on a tangent, you need to bring them right back to what's important.

The quiet majority may not always be able to convince the chiropractic leadership to do things your way. But if you keep the discussion focused on practice-related issues, you will eventually be heard.

### *References*

1. *Job Analysis of Chiropractic*. NBCE, 1993.
2. *Readex Survey of the Chiropractic Profession*. 1996.

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