

Why We Finally Said "Yes"

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For a number of years, different leaders in the acupuncture profession have asked us to develop a *Dynamic Chiropractic*-like publication for acupuncturists. And while those requests have been quite persistent, we have politely declined each time.

My view was, "What's the point?" My father and grandfather were both doctors of chiropractic. My passion is for chiropractic. What did I know about acupuncture? I've never even been to an acupuncturist.

But over the past year, several events have caused me to ponder what might be in the best interest of chiropractic:

1. Dr. Eisenberg's follow-up survey on alternative care use found that the use of acupuncture by the U.S. population more than doubled between 1990 and 1997. While the percentage is still less than 10% of the population using chiropractic, it is growing at a significant rate.¹
2. A survey of MDs showed that 53% believed in the efficacy of chiropractic, versus 51% for acupuncture. And while 40% of the MDs said they would refer patients to chiropractors, 43% said they would refer patients to acupuncturists. Chiropractic and acupuncture were the two professions that led the rest of the "alternative care" providers throughout the paper.²

It's not hard to see the trend. Chiropractic still leads the "alternative care" pack, but acupuncture is making important strides. The question is, can the two professions work together and support each other as leaders in the alternative care movement, or will we treat one another as health care adversaries?

While I still don't know much about acupuncture, the issues are obviously much larger. The majority of the medical profession is still reluctant to refer to chiropractors. It occurs to me that perhaps chiropractic and acupuncture can gain greater prominence and growth over the next few years by referring to each other (when appropriate) and joining forces economically, legislatively and scientifically.

Earlier this year when we were again approached by members of the acupuncture profession to start an acupuncture publication, we presented them with the following conditions regarding the publication:

Pro-Chiropractic -- The publication would have to be pro-chiropractic. Beside the articles about acupuncture, there would have to be articles about what chiropractic is and when an acupuncturist should refer to a doctor of chiropractic.

Referrals -- Each issue would contain an advertisement which would encourage acupuncturists to refer to doctors of chiropractic using the ChiroWeb website Referral Directory (<http://www.chiroweb.com/cgi-bin/locator>).

Cooperation between Professions -- There would have to be a means to join forces politically and economically on the issues that are important to both professions. The publication would have to support that effort.

Our stipulations were agreed to and an agreement was made to publish acupuncture's first monthly newspaper. The staff at *Dynamic Chiropractic* will be providing the editing, design, layout, graphics and production expertise. The content will be provided by various writers and authorities from across the United States.

What's important is that the first bridge between the two professions will be spanned. We hope this effort will open doors for both disciplines, enhance patient care and profession and practice growth.

It may well be that the fate of the chiropractic profession is nestled in the fate of the alternative health care movement.

References

1. Eisenberg DM, Davis RB, Ettner SL, Appel S, Wilkey S, Van Rompay M, Kessler RC. Trends in alternative medicine use in the United States, 1990-1997. *JAMA* 1998;280:1569-1575. (<http://www.chiroweb.com/archives/17/01/10.html>)
2. Astin JA, Marie A, Pelletier KR, Hansen E, Haskell WL. A review of the incorporation of complimentary and alternative medicine by mainstream physicians. *Arch Intern Med* 1998;158:2303-2310.

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