

We Get Letters & E-Mail

The Irony of "Good Science"

Dear Editor:

How apropos that Dr. Andersen's research challenge to the ICAK is juxtaposed with a letter referencing Dr. Barrett's Quackwatch.com ("We Get Letters," September 20, 1999 issue).

Dr. Barrett derides chiropractic, nutrition and many "alternative therapies" on his website and echoes Dr. Andersen's very argument: that there is no "good science" to support the premise of chiropractic; that it is used on an unsuspecting public; and that it is fraught with experimental danger.

Perhaps Dr. Barrett would welcome Dr. Andersen on Quackwatch's board of "advisors" as a fellow self-appointed watchdog and champion for orthodoxy. After all, we all knew chiropractic didn't work until Manga, RAND and others came along with some "good" science!

John Heidrich,DC,DIBAK,CCSP

Geneva, Ohio

johnpook@suite224.netjohnpook@suite224.net

Caught between High Loans and Managed Care

Dear Editor:

I am surprised by the lack of attention to the situation of chiropractic colleges aggressively pushing students to get more and more student loans that most of them will not be able to repay. I know what I am talking about, as I had two sons who started at Logan College six years ago. One practices with me now; the other dropped out after two years, went to medical school and is now a medical resident. Both of my sons had to have student loans while in chiropractic college, in addition to the substantial financial help I was able to give them for three years.

The colleges are deliberately withholding from the students how devastating managed care is to our business. Again, I know by experience, as I have been in full-time practice for 36 years in the St. Petersburg, Florida area. I had a good mix of various types of patients (Medicare, health insurance, PI, etc.) and saw about 150 patient visits per week. My practice has declined to about 50 patient visits on a good week now.

In my county of nearly one million people, all of the major HMOs subscribe to a provider group of less than 10 DCs. This provider group just happens to be owned by a state representative who is a DC and is the gatekeeper. This provider group also has approximately 600 members statewide that provide the chiropractic care for many millions of people in Florida. That means that several thousand DCs who are not providers and are denied membership in this business are grubbing for a living and are rapidly going out of business. I personally know several good practitioners in this

county who have sold out, quit, retired or now work for a quasi-criminal PI mill.

The point I am addressing is that the college leadership does not want the students to know that there are few, if any, opportunities out there. There are generally only three options for new DCs: maintain a private practice; work for a PI mill; or sell equipment. Even this last opportunity has diminished greatly in the last few years, according to some of the major vendors at the FCA's convention in Orlando.

Students will not be able to repay their enormous loans. In the very near future, the loans will no longer be available due to the default rate. The golden goose will be dead. Then how long will it be before our demise? This is not paranoia or doomsday, it's just how I see it after 36 years in practice.

M.K. Roberts, DC
Largo, Florida
mkbert@aol.com

Vaccination and Fluoridation: A Comparison

Dear Editor:

There is a parallel between the fluoridation of water debate and the vaccination issue facing all school-age children and their parents. It is valuable from a public health perspective to examine what is happening in the rest of the world, as we tend to be a bit myopic in the U.S.

Large parts of Europe fluoridated their drinking water for awhile in the 1970s, but without exception, the practice has been discontinued because it was found to be unnecessary, ineffective, costly and even dangerous to some people: the elderly, individuals with compromised kidney function, and people with immune deficiencies. Similarly, with regard to vaccinations, the U.S. is the most vaccinated country in the world. The World Health Organization recommends about half as many vaccinations as we do here.

Two years ago, I wrote an article opposing the widespread use of the hepatitis B vaccination, and instead recommended it only for people of high risk: health care workers, drug users, prostitutes, and people who may be in contact with someone infected. The editor of the *Glenwood Post*, in response to my article, called me the Dr. Kavorkian of Garfield County because of my stance!

Since that time, ABC's "20/20" has done a report on widespread adverse side effects of the vaccination, and even the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons has called for a complete moratorium. Some of the side effects reported include: loss of vision; joint pain; muscle pain; muscle fatigue; multiple sclerosis; arthritis; Guillain-Barre syndrome; and lupus.

The drinking of fluoridated water has also been linked to many adverse side effects, including: cancer; increased rates of hip fracture; dental fluorosis (fluoride poisoning and even death); reduced IQ; and genetic damage. The move to end fluoridation has picked up a lot of speed, with over 70 communities in California voting no on fluoridation.

The similarities between vaccination and fluoridation are many. Both can be effective disease interventions. Both are overused. Both are being driven into overuse by the multitrillion dollar chemical/pharmaceutical industry, which has brainwashed its foot soldiers - the medical doctors and dentists of America - into believing this dogma without compromise. Both also deserve re-evaluation, as demonstrated elsewhere in the world.

With both of these issues, the people of the United States have unknowingly been misled by people in positions of authority, but who are these people and what is their track record? Dentists routinely fill cavities with mercury amalgam, a deadly poison already banned in many European countries. Medical doctors practice drug intervention using drugs, which turn over so quickly that 80% of the medicines on the market 10 years ago are no longer available because they have been found to be ineffective or dangerous. In fact, last month it was announced that the third leading cause of death in the U.S. after heart disease and cancer is medical doctor intervention: drugs and surgery. The medical profession is controlled by the most lucrative business in the world - the pharmaceutical industry - and drugs, vaccinations and fluoridation mean huge profits. Apparently, the rest of the world is not so controlled.

The solution to the predicament is more independence from medicine and the use of alternative medical interventions. Medical doctors by and large are ignorant of acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathy, nutrition, aromatherapy, ayurveda, etc. These interventions produce health promotion and disease prevention, but this isn't all that's needed. There must be a change in the arrogance of the medical profession, the school boards and the newspaper editors who think that their way is the only way. We shouldn't wait for catastrophe.

There is much to do preventatively. The silence that the medical profession and teachers have taken regarding junk foods, fast foods and high-fat diets is reminiscent of the tobacco smoking endorsements of the medical profession of the 1950s. A start in this healing would be a no vote on the fluoridation issue, a resurgence of the public's use of alternative medical interventions, and a return to a less processed, more natural and healthful diet. I pray that the medical profession is not merely paying lip service to alternative medicine, but will really embrace these interventions as a benefit to all.

Abba Krieger,DC,MPH
Carbondale, Colorado

DECEMBER 1999