

New Zealanders Using "Unconventional" Therapies

COVER STORY IN CONSUMER MAGAZINE SHOWS HIGH SATISFACTION WITH CHIROPRACTIC

Editorial Staff

From arsenic to zinc, the cover story of the Sept. 1997 New Zealand magazine, Consumer, told readers in New Zealand that "a remarkable 51 percent of respondents said yes, they had tried at least one (unconventional therapy)." This announcement was based on their survey of 12,000 readers. Of the 8,007 that responded, 4,084 reported using unconventional therapies.

The survey queried respondents on their experiences with:

- acupuncture
- aromatherapy
- chiropractic
- faith healing
- herbal medicine
- homeopathy
- hypnotherapy
- naturopathy
- osteopathy
- reflexology

The summarized results of the survey were:

- 40% of women respondents and 25% of men "tried at least one of the therapies in the last year."
- Only 1/3 received treatment from their general practitioner (GP) "before or during the time they saw a non-conventional therapist." Of those, 65% of the GPs knew their patients were seeing the non-conventional practitioner. The GPs were "supportive in 47 percent of these cases and neutral in 43 percent. The therapy was actively discouraged in only three percent of cases."
- Osteopathy had the highest satisfaction rating - 78%. The Accident Compensation Commission (ACC), which covers all injuries of all people worker and non-worker, will reimburse alternative care when referred from a GP. In the first quarter of 1997, 106,107 treatments costing \$2.2 million were reimbursed by the ACC (an average of \$20.73 NZ per treatment).
- Chiropractic was right behind with a satisfaction rating of 74%. In comparison, for the first quarter of 1997, the ACC paid for 304,973 treatments at a cost of \$5.4 million (an average of \$17.71 NZ per treatment). This was by far ACC's biggest payout on a non-conventional therapy.
- Faith healing also had a high satisfaction rating of 70%

The message that is solidly resounding around the world is clear. People want, use, and will pay out of their own pockets for their choice of care regardless of what the medical establishment has to say.

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