

California News Update

Editorial Staff

CCA Campaigns for Greater Medicare Coverage for Chiropractic

The Clinton administration has expressed interest in using managed care to slow the growth of Medicare. Alice Rivlin, director of the Office of Management/Budget has said: "The whole private sector is moving much more toward managed care, leaving Medicare almost as an anomaly."

The California Chiropractic Association (CCA) is now expressing concern that some Medicare patients are not receiving the same benefits and protections under Medicare managed care plans as they would under Medicare Part B. To discuss the impact this issue could have on chiropractic, members of the CCA met with Jean LeMasurier, director of Policy and Program Improvement, Managed Care Office at the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) in Washington, D.C.

The CCA contingent (President Craig Little, DC, Executive Director Garrett Cuneo, Jerilynn Kaibel, DC, chair of the Insurance Commission, and Kurt Hegetschweiler, DC, chair of the Legislative Commission) related their concerns that Medicare managed care plans are using non-physician personnel to do physician-required functions. Dr. Little pointed out that some HMOs, Kaiser Permanente in particular, use PTs to perform spinal manipulation on Medicare patients, even though PTs are not included in the Medicare definition of physicians.

The group also addressed concern that:

- availability of promotional materials to senior citizens regarding certain services are misleading;
- it is increasingly difficult to qualify for the spinal manipulation benefit;
- there is a trend in many MCOs to take the 12 visit screen and make it a limitation, which is contrary to HCFA regulations.

The CCA representatives also met with members and staff of the California Congressional delegation.

Survey Rates Clinic Tops

For the fourth straight year, patients responding to a survey about Life Chiropractic College-West's teaching clinic gave the facility high marks, with 91 percent rating the clinic excellent or good in areas ranging from quality of care to the clinic's appearance. The survey, completed in March 1995, queried nearly 300 patients, 90 percent of whom said they believed chiropractic care was helping them.

Scholarly Kudos

Los Angeles of Chiropractic-West students Marcus Strutz and Naomi Bauer won achievement scholarships for winter quarter 1995, and Kendra Holloway received an award for both winter and spring quarters. Students are selected based not only on academic standing, but community service activities and personal accomplishments.

Faculty Member Authors Chiropractic Book

Life West alumnus/faculty member W. Michael Gazdar, DC, CCSP, has written *Taking Your Back to the Future*, a book designed to help patients understand the role of chiropractic in health. The book includes true patient stories, a guide to finding a good chiropractor, exercises, and current research on the effectiveness of chiropractic care. "My goal is to get as many people as possible to chiropractors so that they can become healthier," said Dr. Gazdar.

Life West Assoc. Professor Published in JMPT

Thomas Gregory, DC, PhD, LCCW associate professor and research assistant, has co-authored an article that appeared in the February 1995 issue of JMPT. The article "The Effect of Exercise on the Presence of Leukocytes, Erythrocytes, and Collagen Fibers in Skeletal Muscle After Contusion," was co-authored by Richard Heckmann, PhD, and Rulon Francis, PhD, both of Brigham Young University. The article focuses on how exercise can affect the healing of a muscle contusion, or bruise.

New Clinical Practice Curriculum

Palmer College of Chiropractic-West has introduced a new clinical practice curriculum, a 13-quarter program that begins with the incoming class of summer quarter '95 that standardizes the first 10 quarters. There will be courses which emphasize specific areas of instruction linked by common subject matter over several successive quarters: chiropractic clinical evaluation; chiropractic technique and management; foundations of chiropractic practice; problem solving in differential diagnosis; radiographic interpretation; and a series of courses that emphasize the development of primary care skills.

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