

## Are These Our Gatekeepers?

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What happened to Marcus Welby? What is the public perception of the medical profession? Why don't people like MDs as before?

In 1993, the AMA's public survey revealed 7 out of 10 people are losing faith in MDs; in 1982 it was 62 percent. The public (35 percent) is blaming doctors for the nation's health care crisis. Forty one percent (41%) say doctors are "most opposed to health care reform." Sixty nine percent (69%) said, "doctors are too interested in making money."

There is no doubt that MDs have lost a great deal of public trust. The problem is that greed and arrogance are rampant. Patients need time, attention, personal, professional interest, not interest in money. Patients want warm touch and talk, not the modern MD/technologist ordering lab tests and MRIs that warm no hands.

New stories on medical progress and miracle drugs receive prominent space, but the inevitable side effects and therapeutic failures eventually develop. How often one hears, "We went from doctor to doctor -- none of them knew what to do, until a friend sent me to a chiropractor, and now I'm fine." Do you think the MDs will ever admit chiropractic may be better for the patient? Rare is the allopath who will. How many gatekeepers are capable of this level of honesty?

Patients see the MD "who talks to them with his hand on the door knob." Patients call doctors, and they refuse to come to the phone. The public knows of the huge incomes some doctors make from the sick. Most don't begrudge doctors making money, but one half million dollars or more is hard to understand. Doctors order high ticket items at facilities they own -- they get a double income. Helping people is not the only motivation. Are these enough reasons for antagonism?

Who's to blame? Patients want caring doctors who care about their lives, about making them healthier, about feeling better, more than just curing.

Do we as DCs want this perception? Are we willing to maintain a high level of integrity and stop those among us who are greedy and ruining our relationship with the public. Our state boards must revoke licenses and suspend practice privileges of those unworthy of chiropractic practice. Self-assessment and renewal of old-fashioned honesty is the best chiropractic answer to Marcus Welby. Do you feel as I do?

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