

Personal Commentary

STAKING THE CLAIM, PART I

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The chiropractic profession, based on our professional training, must stake its claim as experts in correcting the vertebral subluxation complex. This is the unique service offered by the DC which is not presently included under the medical umbrella.

Correction of the vertebral subluxation complex is in the domain of the DC. It cannot be considered as a duplication of medical service, because it is not taught in medical colleges. Anyone treating patients for this condition without the comparable training of the DC will be cited as using a treatment procedure in which they lack the education and training. They will be in violation of the law (Chiropractic Practice Act in each state) and will be charged with practicing chiropractic without a license. The courts, in the interest of protecting the public health, will be obligated to uphold the law and support our position.

Years ago the Saturday afternoon matinee often found many of us at the theater watching western movies. I recall how upset we would get when the good guy discovers gold and the bad guy would beat him to the claim's office to file the claim first. Many prospectors were cheated out of their claims and fortunes. Chiropractors have a greater treasure in our knowledge of the vertebral subluxation complex and its correction than all the gold in the world.

When should we stake our claim? We need to do it now. What is the single unique service that you as a chiropractor can perform that other doctors are not licensed or qualified to do? Ask that question of any DC and they will probably answer: "We correct the vertebral subluxation complex." After 99 years, chiropractic needs to use new technology to prove the vertebral subluxation complex and claim it as our domain.

Contemplate this: The medical profession includes in their mode of practice all treatment procedures and remedies which they consider in the best interest and welfare of the patient. The only treatment procedure they haven't claimed yet is correction of the vertebral subluxation complex. There isn't a single medical school curriculum that has formal training in correction of the vertebral subluxation complex. Just where will chiropractic be when they accidentally discover the vertebral subluxation complex and claim it as a part of medical practice? Once the vertebral subluxation complex and the adjustment is stolen from chiropractic, what would we have that keeps us separate and distinct? Don't read any further until you think about it. What would we really have?

Most everyone agrees that our health care delivery system is in a deplorable state and in need of fixing. It needs fixing because it isn't working. This is the appropriate time for chiropractors to stake our claim. This will open the door of opportunity for chiropractic to prove its effectiveness in preventive care.

Many people are now saying that the greatest need we have today is in preventive care. Hillary Clinton says so; former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop says so. When you think about it, the medical profession is sorely lacking in this area. What do they really have to offer? Vaccinations for

everybody? That certainly doesn't solve the problem, does it? Look at the statistics of leading causes of death. They are not prevented by immunization programs.

Chiropractic Needs to Go on the Offense

The central issue is this: How much time and energy is the chiropractic profession spending on documenting the vertebral subluxation complex? It seems that we are always on the defense in chiropractic. We fought for survival in national health care reform, spending tremendous sums of money by placing ads in newspapers, lobbying in the halls of congress, defending one attack after the other by the AMA in the media. As soon as we are attacked, we rush to reward the same media that criticized us in the beginning. Then we give them hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay for ads in their publications.

When are we going to learn our lesson? The only time you score points in any field of endeavor is when you are on the offense. Chiropractic needs to go on the offense. Let's take the true story of chiropractic to the decisions makers. What is the true story of chiropractor? This is it in a nutshell: The chiropractor is expert in correcting the vertebral subluxation complex, period.

Who are the decision makers? The news media, TV, radio, newspaper, insurance companies, the scientific community, the legislators and John Q. Public. They don't take us seriously because we have never shown them visual evidence of what the vertebral subluxation complex is and what it can cause. It is vital that we identify the vertebral subluxation complex as a key factor in dysponesis (a reversible physiopathologic state capable of producing functional disorders). This will stop the decision makers from limiting us to musculoskeletal conditions.

Part II will discuss a plan for staking our claim, how the plan is to be initiated, and an overview of the vertebral subluxation complex which is our proof of claim.

Editor's note: Part II of this two-part article will appear in the Dec. 2 issue.

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