

## New Jersey Health Board Lists DCs as Primary Care Providers

Editorial Staff

At the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners' insistence, chiropractic care was included within the primary and preventative care section of New Jersey's proposed health plan during a February 4, 1993 meeting of the State Health Planning Board. The inclusion of chiropractic was a definite coup, since the initial draft of the plan omitted it entirely.

The impetus for New Jersey to create a health plan came when the state's Department of Health decided to revamp its health care system, aiming to lower the costs of state health care and find some solutions to the increasing number of residents without medical insurance. One of the department's central concerns was defining which professions are capable of providing preventative and primary care, and assuring the public has access to all qualified providers of primary care.

The medical community pushed itself to the forefront of those providers offering input in designing and implementing the state's health plan. Professors of medicine from the University of Medicine and Dentistry in New Jersey, and members of the various medical societies, states nurses' association, and several specialty organizations, formed a united allopathic front to influence state policy-makers.

As expected, the original draft of the official state definition of primary care included MDs, DOs, advanced nurse practitioners, and dentists, but excluded DCs.

Arnold E. Cianciulli, MS, DC, FICC, FACC, member of the New Jersey Board of Chiropractic Examiners, president of NCMIC, and FCER trustee, immediately took action against the omission of chiropractic. He initiated official correspondence from the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners to the Department of Health requesting that the department amend the definition of primary care to include chiropractic. He also sent the Department of Health the FCER-produced booklet, *Chiropractic: A Primary Care Gatekeeper*, which he authored.

Dr. Cianciulli's persistence yielded results. The New Jersey State Health Planning Board's decision was reversed and chiropractic was included in the state's proposed health plan.

With the Clinton administration and individual states currently in the process of developing new health care programs, chiropractic must push for primary care status. New Jersey is a good beginning, and other states are likely to follow. But as in New Jersey, chiropractic will be left out if the profession doesn't lobby for inclusion.

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