

IQ -- Interesting Quote

Editorial Staff

The Growing Chiropractic Profession

The following excerpt is taken from the paper "The Growing Role of Chiropractic in Health Care Delivery" in the November/December 1992 issue of the Journal of Health Care Policy. The paper was authored by Miron Stano, PhD, professor at the School of Business at Oakland University; Jack Ehrhart, MD, MPH, and Thomas Allenberg, DC. Research for the paper was supported by a grant from the American Chiropractic Association.

The article is one of several authored by Dr. Stano which examines the economic viability of chiropractic care. "As U.S. policymakers debate creation of standard or minimum benefit packages," the paper states, "these new findings may help to determine whether chiropractic meets the criteria of clinical efficacy and cost-effectiveness."

"Until recently, chiropractic has been reviled by organized medicine. Despite that opposition, however, the number of chiropractors increased by about 66 percent to 40,000 between 1978 and 1988 (U.S. DHHS, 1990). Receipts of chiropractic offices and clinics subject to the federal income tax totaled \$3.3 billion in 1987, an increase of 132 percent from 1982 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1989). This growth rate was nearly twice the overall growth rate for professional health services, making chiropractic the fastest growing segment of the market. Commensurate with this growth, there has been a large increase in chiropractors' net incomes. One survey reported a rise in median earnings from \$39,300 in 1980 to \$78,500 in 1988 and a rise in mean earnings from \$46,906 in 1980 to \$101,423 in 1988 (Brennan, 1991)."

The burgeoning number of chiropractors in the United States and their increasing income will have numerous effects on the health care arena in general, our profession in particular, and our patients. The obvious question is: Can we increase our numbers (and our incomes) and still maintain the quality care that has made chiropractic "the fastest growing segment" of professional health services?

References

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Brennan MJ: 1990 Annual Survey and Statistical Study, Arlington VA: American Chiropractic Association, Department of Statistics, January 1991.

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