

Wisconsin Law Requires DCs Have Bachelor's Degree, Mandatory Malpractice Insurance

Editorial Staff

On August 20, 1993, Wisconsin Governor Tommy G. Thompson signed into law Wisconsin Act 31. The law, which takes effect April 1, 1994, will bring a number of important changes to chiropractic in Wisconsin:

Out-of-State-Licensure -- The law allows the Wisconsin Board to issue a "license to practice chiropractic to an individual who is licensed in good standing to practice chiropractic in another state or territory in the United States or in another country." The board also has the power to grant a temporary permit to practice.

Regulated Preceptorships -- Act 31 provides for "a program for the clinical training of students and graduates that is reviewed and approved by the examining board." The student or graduate would be supervised by a licensed DC in conjunction with a chiropractic college.

Delegated Services -- Chiropractors in Wisconsin will be able to delegate "the performance of services that are adjunctive to the practice of chiropractic if the services are performed under the direct, on-premises supervision of the chiropractor." The Board will be establishing the educational requirements for those non-DCs who perform adjunctive services.

Bachelor's Degree -- Wisconsin joins Maryland, North Carolina, and Florida in requiring that chiropractors have a "bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by an accrediting body listed as nationally recognized by the secretary of the federal department of education." Wisconsin chiropractic applicants graduating after June 30, 1998, must have proof of having earned a bachelor's degree to be licensed.

Mandatory Malpractice Insurance -- The new law requires every practicing chiropractor to maintain professional liability (malpractice) insurance. Wisconsin is believed to be the first state to make malpractice insurance mandatory.

The Wisconsin Board, chaired by Meredith Bakke, DC, Peter Vrieze, DC, (vice-chairman), Terry Freitag, DC, (secretary), Cynthia Green, James Greenwald, DC, and Bettye Lawrence, feels these changes are the appropriate response to the developments in health care in the past 20 years. The board has stated: "The greater flexibility these changes allow and the reductions of unnecessary barriers to licensure will permit more responsive and focused regulation of chiropractic in Wisconsin and assist in the efficient and effective delivery of chiropractic care to Wisconsin's citizens."

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