

We Get Letters

Dear Editor:

"...take the leap of faith?"

The purpose of this letter is not to compile data for some scientific study, but rather, to satisfy my own "need to know." The major premise of chiropractic is logical, well-founded, and difficult to challenge or dispute. It is clear that structure affects function. Most of us tell our patients that our job is to find and correct the subluxations. It is regarding this most important aspect of chiropractic practice that I now seek the input of my colleagues.

There are many, many analyses and techniques being presented as the "most effective" or "best way" to find and correct subluxations. Often, they bear no resemblance to one another. Surely, some must be correct and others pure folly! But, how do we know exactly when and where a subluxation exists? And how can we be certain we've corrected it after the adjustment? Why do some feel we can accomplish this goal without repeatedly adjusting the same vertebra week after week? Perhaps the segment need only be helped into position once or twice?!

Does it boil down to "Don't ask questions ... take the leap of faith"? Honest responses will be received with an open mind and sincere appreciation.

*Elliot S. Krakow, DC
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Is Dr. Keating Changing His Tune?

Dear Editor:

Dr. Keating used to say that a chiropractic science journal that is peer reviewed usually has "superior" quality material within its pages.¹ Now, in the wake of new peer reviewed chiropractic science journals on the scene, that happen to be more traditional, more subluxation oriented (i.e., Chiropractic Research Journal -- Life College; Journal of Chiropractic Research -- Palmer College; Journal of Case Reports -- Sherman College), Dr. Keating happens to be changing his tune. By conspicuously omitting these peer reviewed science journals from his "Ivory Tower" list of peer reviewed journals,² Dr. Keating implies that these "new journals whose quality seems rather questionable" are printing "fluff and pseudo-science."² I find it curious that Dr. Keating (an advocate of the scientific method) fails to inform us what parameters are used to determine what is to be considered "fluff" and what is not. I suspect that the real objection about these newer journals has to do with the fact that they are publishing traditional chiropractic material in a positive way. This the liberal wing in chiropractic cannot tolerate. The issue is not about peer review or science (as much as some try to make it seem); it is about competition of paradigms,

which is good, but let's call it what it is so we can get on with some meaningful debate.

References

1. Keating JC: What is a chiropractic science journal? *Dynamic Chiropractic*. January 17, 1990, pp. 42-3.
2. Keating JC: Slow progress. *Dynamic Chiropractic*. November 5, 1993, pp. 44-5.

John F. Hart, DC
Des Moines, Iowa

"...shed the shackles of being unscientific..."

Dear Editor:

I have read the articles by Dr. Lowell Ward and the letters to the editor in response to Dr. Ward's article and last, Dr. Ward's response and his Radiographic Progress Evaluation (RPE).

If the entire chiropractic profession could show, objectively, structural correction as Dr. Ward is doing and show subjective improvement with documentation we could, as a profession, shed the shackles of being unscientific, a belief system, palliative treatment, etc., etc., and prove once and for all that chiropractic not only works but is understandable, predictable, objective, and safe not only for "sore backs" but for a multitude of different ailments.

We chiropractors know and believe that we are good for more than just low back but as a profession we have failed dismally to convey that knowledge to the general public. Possibly Dr. Ward's work will open a lot of doors in that direction.

I sat in dumbfounded awe at the doctor with a son with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy as I read his remarks regarding Dr. Ward's work. He condemned his son to guaranteed failure with his present medical treatment that tells him he cannot get better. His condemnation is with total ignorance and prejudice. If I had a son with DMD I would at least check it out and make an intelligent decision and let my son have a chance to help in that decision.

I for one will contact Dr. Ward's office for more information.

Wade K. Randall, DC
Lacey, Washington

"What a farce"

Dear Editor:

I do enjoy receiving the newspaper *Dynamic Chiropractic*. It certainly keeps us well informed as to what is new in chiropractic.

The October 8th issue compels me to write and add my one cent. AHCPR awarding \$979,751 for a

comparison between chiropractic and physical therapy? I think you should have put a question mark after that as I did. What kind of a joke is this? There is no comparison. Chiropractic is chiropractic -- physical therapy is physical therapy. You can't judge apples and pears. And the sum of money for research, can't AHCPR find better ways to give away money? We have people who could do a bang up research job for \$50,000. What a farce.

Keep on keeping us informed.

James A. Schimp, DC
Hartford, Wisconsin

Obsession with Immunization

Dear Editor:

Why are chiropractors so obsessed with immunization? The issue of a patient's right to choose whether or not to be vaccinated has touched on emotions throughout the chiropractic profession. Immunization has nothing to do with the scope of chiropractic practice. Yet chiropractors continue to spend time, money and misdirected effort to make a stand on immunization.

For some in the chiropractic profession the issue has gone beyond a patient's right to choose to an all out attack on immunization. There are those in the profession that hand out pamphlets and tell their patients to avoid vaccinations. To think that chiropractors are advising their patients not to be immunized is very disturbing. Chiropractors are not qualified to give their patients advice on immunization, just as medical doctors are not qualified to render an opinion on the efficacy of spinal adjustment.

On the other hand, we should not be so quick to endorse immunization for the same reason that we should not oppose it, we are not the experts. So therefore, do we have the right to educate our patients about the potential complications of immunization and lobby for freedom of choice? Absolutely, but not as chiropractors, only as concerned citizens outside of our chiropractic offices. We are the experts of the neuromusculoskeletal system, not internal medicine.

As a health care profession we need to make a choice, either drop the issue of immunization or change our scope of practice. With the latter we must be prepared to take on the increased responsibility and liability. Should a patient become seriously ill after deferring immunization on the advice of their chiropractor, they may hold the doctor accountable. The doctor will probably be found liable regardless of the fact that the illness most likely resulted from the patient's unhealthy lifestyle.

We can better serve our patients by giving them chiropractic adjustments, nutritional advice, and therapeutic exercises that help strengthen their immune systems, regardless of whether or not they are vaccinated. Let's stick with what we do best and let the issue of immunization rest.

Michael H. Florek, DC
Indian River, Michigan

Hallelujah for Dr. Barge!

Dear Dr. Barge:

Hallelujah! for your article on "Chiropractic's greatest tactical error."

My father, Palmer '55 graduate and still practicing, told me stories as a child everyday of some unusual condition, and chiropractic's role in the body's healing. I rarely recall he ever discussed back aches or neck aches, and it made lots of sense to me as a young child that the body could heal the mess that it created.

I totally and sincerely agree that the profession has lost its focus, and urge young students of chiropractic to spend time in my office where we still see a variety of conditions where "modern" health care has failed.

These conditions other than sore necks and backs are the most exciting in practice, respond wonderfully, and are the real value we offer society.

If there is any way we can spread the word to our profession, you have my full support.

S. Brad Miller, DC
Pasadena, California

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