

Mercy Conference Update

BLUE CROSS/BLE SHIELD OF NEW JERSEY TO CONDUCT IN-HOUSE CHIROPRACTIC WORKSHOP

Editorial Staff

Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey (BC/BS) will be conducting an in-house chiropractic workshop as an effort to establish a peer review system using guidelines established by field practitioners. In that effort, BC/BS has requested a copy of the Mercy Center Guidelines for review. In the past, such a document could not have been provided to BC/BS, for the simple reason that the profession had no consensus practice guidelines' document. Now we have the opportunity to base the peer review system on chiropractic guidelines rather than parameters set by medical physicians.

The agenda for the chiropractic workshop is as follows:

I. How to manage chiropractic care in the patient with underlying medical problems and handicaps.

1. Cerebral palsy in the child/adult and other pediatric conditions
2. Multiple sclerosis
3. Down's syndrome
4. Post traumatic injury/MVA
5. Other atypical cases

II. Defining maintenance and supportive care: a chiropractic viewpoint.

III. State of the art acceptable guidelines for chiropractic practice.

IV. Red flag indicators that signal abuse.

V. Other than independent chiropractic exam, how safe are we from a legal viewpoint?

VI. What are the circumstances when the ordering of MRI and CAT scans would be indicated versus referral to allopathic specialists?

VII. Questions and answers period.

The benefits and opportunities being generated for chiropractic by the release of a number of well placed pre-publication draft copies of the Mercy Center Guidelines continues to grow. When the

final edited Mercy Center Guidelines are distributed in August to every chiropractor in the United States, the impact of this profession-wide dissemination could reap incredible results.

ACC Offers to Develop Feedback Mechanism for Mercy Guidelines

When the question of who should own the copyright for the Mercy Center Guidelines was initially considered, the Association of Chiropractic Colleges (ACC) was first to ask for the opportunity to evaluate ownership. The chiropractic college presidents considered the idea of being responsible for the copyright in meetings and conference calls throughout March, April, and May. During that time, the ACC also considered what part the chiropractic colleges should play in the guidelines' process.

After careful consideration, the ACC chose not to own the copyright, but to have Aspen Publishers, Inc. be the copyright holders. The college presidents concluded their role would be best directed to the response process after the Mercy Center Guidelines have been disseminated to all the chiropractors in the United States. This was presented in the following resolution:

"The ACC declines the copyright, but offers to coordinate and be the primary funding agency for reconvening the original 35 conferees of the Mercy Center Document during 1993 for the purpose of addressing concerns which have been raised about the document and for the solicitation of new information which may impact the Mercy Center Document, with the intent of submitting proposed changes to the consensus process."

While the ACC would prefer to reconvene the original 35 conferees prior to the release of the Guidelines, the ACC wants to be a part of the response process after the August 1992 dissemination. The ACC's position was presented by ACC President Gerard W. Clum, D.C. in a letter to the Advisory Committee of the Mercy Center Conference. He stated:

"We envision a broad-based opportunity for reaction and input directed through the sponsoring associations and a well designed review and response process prior to submission for consensus consideration.

"It is our opinion that the ACC may serve this consensus further in a very unique fashion. The Association offers the services of our institutions, our faculty, and our alumni."

Every chiropractor in the United States is being given the opportunity to review, respond, and provide input to the Mercy Center Guidelines; that is the reason the Guidelines will be mailed at no cost to the D.C. The current timing of the next Guidelines Conference is sometime in 1994. The participation of the chiropractic colleges, their faculty, and alumni will insure success in the response phase of the guidelines process.

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