

Louisiana HMO Law Gives Chiropractic a Foothold

Editorial Staff

As health care moves ever more into the realm of managed care, chiropractic finds itself faced with the important challenge of making inroads into the huge HMO market. While some notable success has been achieved by the individual efforts of DCs getting chiropractic inclusion in some HMOs (e.g., see "New Mexico's Leading HMO to Open Chiropractic Facility" in the May 10, 1991 issue of "DC), a broader means to that end is the legislative route.

One piece of legislation of interest is taking place in Louisiana. Louisiana Governor Edwin Edwards signed into law June 18th legislation that becomes effective August 20, 1992, requiring HMOs to provide chiropractic care _if_ an enrollee with a neurologic orthopedic condition necessitates referral that falls under the scope of chiropractic.

Prior to this legislation, such coverage was optional for HMOs.

Dr. Donald Marx, legislative chairman of the Chiropractic Association of Louisiana assessed the legislation: "We realized going in that the proposed legislation would not be a panacea with respect to chiropractic's inclusion in HMOs. But it opens a door previously closed to us, and in so doing, offers many HMO enrollees a chance to return to the chiropractic care they prefer."

The bill was filed by Representative Glen Ansardi and drew vital support from Senator Gerry Hinton, D.C., chairman of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee. Dr. Marx pointed to the efforts of many practitioners "who carried out the grassroots portion of our campaign."

JULY 1992