

ICA Board Adopts Major New Policies And Resolutions For the 90s

Editorial Staff

Arlington, VA.: The board of directors of the International Chiropractors Association (ICA) adopted major new policies and resolutions and gave its support to several important issues at its annual meeting in Tampa, Florida.

For the first time, the board drafted and approved policy statements on numerous key issues such as chiropractic diagnosis, practice of chiropractic, open access to chiropractic licensure, fluoridation, immunization and vaccination, and child care. In addition, a new two-year comprehensive public relations plan was approved. Beginning this year, the ICA is launching an aggressive media campaign to promote and educate the public on chiropractic while providing strong leadership and guidance in helping members market their services on a local level.

The board also readopted ICA's Code of Ethics for the doctor of chiropractic, without any changes from the original document adopted in 1987. The Code of Ethics is based upon fundamental principles of moral and professional behavior and include in fairly lengthy detail the duties, obligations and responsibilities of DCs to their patients, the public, and the profession.

In a move which demonstrates ICA's commitment to the profession, the board voted to support a lawsuit brought by Dr. Ernest Cohn, a North Carolina chiropractor against a public hospital. Dr. Cohn has been engaged in legal action against the hospital since 1984, claiming it denied him staff privileges. It was the board's consensus that ICA, which was the first national organization to support the Wilk suit, should continue assisting chiropractors in their fight for hospital privileges, and that a positive outcome in this suit could open doors in other states.

A brief synopsis of ICA's new policy statements and resolutions are as follows:

I. ICA Policy On Chiropractic Diagnosis: This policy statement states ICA's commitment "to the concept that the chiropractic profession is a specialized field in the health care delivery system, and that its primary focus and expertise is in the diagnosis of and functional alignment of the osseous structures of the human body, particularly the spine, to affect the relationship of these structures with the nervous system, and how this relationship affects the restoration and preservation of health." The purpose of specific chiropractic diagnostic procedures are also described in detail.

II. ICA Policy On The Practice Of Chiropractic: This statement addresses the principles and definitions of the profession and clarifies ICA's position on this important issue. The policy states that, "While respecting individual and state rights, the International Chiropractors Association holds that it is in the best interest of the chiropractic profession and the consuming public to advocate the promote a standardized and consistent scope of practice worldwide."

III. ICA Policy On Open Access To Chiropractic Licensure: The official policy states ICA's support "of free and open licensure for qualified candidates in all states and jurisdictions. Furthermore, the ICA holds that any licensing authority that restricts access to licensure for qualified graduates for

political reasons or to restrict competition in a state or jurisdiction are in violation of the public trust, and are engaging in grossly unfair behavior at the expense of the chiropractic profession and the consumer."

IV. ICA Flouridation Policy: Fluoridation of the nation's "public drinking water," according to this policy, "constitutes a form of mass medication." The policy also addresses the fact that there is inconclusive evidence that fluoride is "safe, beneficial, and without possible cause of future bodily harm." Therefore, ICA "considers water flouridation to be possibly harmful and a deprivation of the rights of citizens to be free from unwelcome mass medication. The association is opposed to the addition of fluoride in any of its forms to the public drinking water supplied of our nation's cities and municipalities."

V. ICA Policy On Immunization And Vaccination: ICA "recognizes that the use of vaccines is not without risk, and is aware of the beneficial consequences of some that have proven to be reasonably safe." However, the association "is opposed to compulsory programs" and supports a "conscience clause or waiver in compulsory vaccination laws, providing an elective course of action for all regarding immunization, thereby allowing patients freedom of choice in matters affecting their bodies and health."

VI. ICA Child Care Resolution: ICA strongly believes in the necessity of providing the best pediatric chiropractic care and "recommends the earliest possible evaluation, detection, and correction of chiropractic lesions in children, especially infants, to maximize the potential for normal growth and development."

A handbook containing ICA's complete policy statements and Code of Ethics is available through the ICA. Mail inquiries to ICA 1110 North Glebe Road, #1000, Arlington, Virginia 22201.

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