

## Medicine Becomes More Corrupted As Chiropractic Edifies Itself

WILL WE LEARN FROM HISTORY? OR JUST REPEAT MEDICINE'S MISTAKES?

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h), Publisher

In an effort to monitor the AMA/medical profession, MPI has subscribed to the American Medical News. It seemed only appropriate that if the AMA is going to be watching the chiropractic profession, that we at least make an effort to monitor what the medical tabloids have to say about the issues occurring within medicine.

If you have never read an issue, you have missed something. If you ever see it sold somewhere, buy a copy and at least page through it. Some of what you read will sound familiar.

You would be amazed to discover just how many problems the medical and chiropractic professions share. It appears that the problems of overutilization and third party payors are just as (if not more) common in medicine than they are in chiropractic. (Eventually it will become obvious even to the politicians that the real culprit behind the \$6 BILLION wasted each year on unnecessary health care is medicine.)

But there is (at least) one item that we DON'T share with medicine: THE DIRECTION OUR PROFESSION IS GOING

While medicine is becoming less popular, chiropractic is increasing not only in patient satisfaction (please see Cherkin DC, MacCormack FA: Patient evaluations of low back pain care from family physicians and chiropractors. Western Journal of Medicine 1989 March; 150:351-355) but also in the public eye.

But perhaps the most important difference was made very clear in an article in the June 22, 1990 issue of the American Medical News. The article is entitled, "Ones with great achievements or great profits? Which doctors shall we choose for our heroes?"

The most notable aspect of the article is the terms "old heroes" and "new heroes." The old heroes were described as Hippocrates, Percival (who published a medical code of ethics in 1803), Pasteur, Schweitzer, etc. Even the names of current medical figures were classified with the "old heroes."

This is how the new heroes were described:

"In the last several years a new type of medical hero has joined the scene. These are individuals who measure their success by how much money they earn, the number of patients seen, or the volume of surgery performed (sound familiar?). A totally different way of measuring success has emerged, apart from our traditional hero models. Besides what they are doing to our profession, what bothers me the most is that they serve as role models for the other physicians. These physicians look at the new heroes and begin to shape their practices based on their new role models."

The trend in medicine is obvious. What has been suspected for some time has now come to prominence: many physicians are in it for the money first and everything else second.

Fortunately, the pendulum is swinging the other way for the chiropractic profession: State and national associations are combating the "money motivated" image, a blight that some organizations have brought upon the profession (please see "California Chiropractic Association's Resolution on Practice Management Groups," June 20, 1990 issue). Chiropractic research is gaining greater and greater recognition ("ICSM Sets the Standard for Research" June 20, 1990 issue).

Our "new heroes" are the likes of George McAndrews, Esq. ("George McAndrews Files In Supreme Court Against JCAH," June 6, 1990 issue), James Gregg, D.C. ("New Center Hospital: A Successful Model for the Future," May 9, 1990 issue), Reed Phillips, D.C., M.S.C.M., Ph.D. ("Reed B. Phillips Named 1990 FCER Researcher of the Year," June 20, 1990 issue) and Scott Haldeman, D.C., M.D. ("1990 Recipients of ACA Awards," July 4, 1990 issue).

The real question we need to ask is:

Will we continue in this direction or turn and follow the MDs?

If we can work towards those goals that are in the best interest of the patient, the patients will insure our future. If not...

Perhaps by the year 2000, the law makers across the country will be fashioning laws to control medical abuses using chiropractic policies as a model.

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