

## Australian National Associations Merge

Editorial Staff

On Friday, September 21, 1990, the following special resolutions were put to the respective annual general meetings of the Australian Chiropractors' Association (ACA) federal body and the United Chiropractors' Association of Australasia Limited (UCAA).

"That the Australian Chiropractors' Associates amalgamates with the United Chiropractors Association of Australasia Limited; and that the amalgamated body be a company limited by guarantee known as the Chiropractors' Association of Australia (National) Limited."

"That following incorporation of the company limited by guarantee to be known as the Chiropractors' Association of Australia (National) Limited, the Australian Chiropractors' Association shall give and/or transfer its assets, liabilities and undertakings to the Chiropractors' Association of Australia (National) Limited at such time as shall be nominated by the executive."

As a federation of state and territory branches, the ACA meeting had representatives (40 in number) vote on behalf of their autonomous companies on the matter, additionally some 120 ACA members were in attendance.

The UCAA Limited, as a national organization of individual members, had an impressive turnout considering how few of the their members reside in Victoria -- 130 voters were present either in person or by proxy. To satisfy corporate requirements a 75% majority vote in favor of the special resolutions was required for their passage. At the ACA meeting the decision was unanimous, and at the UCAA Limited only three proxies, specifically directed in the negative, were cast against the motions.

Such a resounding success may be deemed to be an indication that the result was a foregone conclusion, however it represented the culmination of an extremely protracted process over many years including numerous emotive meetings at which expressions of dissension were made from various elements within both associations.

As related during the Saturday evening "Celebration Banquet," the first tentative discussions on the subject of merger were held some 21 years earlier between Dr. Ed Devereaux, UCAA Limited president, and the current ACA executive director, Dr. John Sweaney. Certainly the time was not then right for any positive developments. Later a determined effort over a two year period from 1978 to 1980 failed when irreconcilable differences arose relating to educational issues. It then took until 1985 before mechanisms once again were set in motion to improve the relationship, and finally with the added significant commitment of Dr. Paul Searle and two years of intense negotiations success was achieved.

As agreed upon, the new organization, the Chiropractors' Association of Australia will involve a national body of individual members and eight autonomous branches, one in each state and territory. Regulations have been determined that will clearly delineate the areas of responsibility of the federal and branch components. New companies have been incorporated for each body and with the completion of all corporate requirements, it is anticipated that the new association will

commence operating December 1, 1990.

The initial board of directors of the national body contains equal representation from the two parent associations and, except where there is inconsiderable disparity in the numerical strength of each association, similar equality will exist on the branch executives. The new association should represent over 1,400 chiropractors of a total number of approximately 2,000 registered practitioners throughout Australia.

Within hours of the decision, expressions of congratulations were received, including one from the federal minister of health in addition to communiques from chiropractors from all regions of the county and a number of overseas associations.

Leaders of the profession in Australia have expressed the hope that this achievement may inspire greater unity on a national level in other countries around the world and help promote the objectives of the World Federation of Chiropractic by establishing a universally appreciated and respected identity for chiropractic. Within Australia amalgamation will certainly enhance the profession's efforts to attain greater recognition of chiropractic services, including provision of benefits to patients through Medicare. The members of the National Executive of the Chiropractors' Association of Australia will be:

Joint Chairmen

- Dr. Ed Devereaux, New South Wales
- Dr. Paul Searle, Tasmania

Secretary

- Dr. Robert Scott, Western Australia Treasurer
- Dr. Vince Pandolfi, New South Wales Members
- Dr. Jeffrey Bowman, A.C.T.
- Dr. Andrew Lawrence, Victoria
- Dr. Alan Plint, Queensland
- Dr. Frank Portelli, New South Wales

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Editor's Note: We owe our Australian brethren a debt of gratitude for demonstrating that perseverance pays off. The ability to maintain the integrity of their members and still keep the vision of unity alive is a testimony to the fact that unity without uniformity is a possible dream.

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