



NEWS / PROFESSION

NUHS to Host Strategic Planning Conference

Editorial Staff

LOMBARD, Ill. - On Feb. 17-19, 2006, National University of Health Sciences will play host to "Chiropractic Strategic Planning for the Next 25 Years: An Action Plan for Grounding Chiropractic Cultural Authority," an unaffiliated conference hosted by the "Chiropractic Strategic Planning Steering Committee." The purpose of the conference is to develop an action plan and agents for change necessary for achieving cultural authority on behalf of the chiropractic profession and the public it serves.

Chiropractic Strategic Planning for the Next 25 Years: Questions and Answers



What is the conference's objective? The objective of the conference is "To coalesce an authoritative, patient-centered professional constituency that, through an articulated action plan, can exert leverage for reform within and anchor cultural authority for the profession to yield quality care for patients who can benefit from its services. Leverage, in this context, refers to actions or interventions consistent with the action plan that can have a lasting impact on the system of health care delivery in terms of reversing negative trends and breaking vicious cycles."

Why is the conference being held? The unique knowledge base and distinctive services that are historically the domain of the chiropractic profession are eroding rapidly, and direct competition is rising. The level of cultural authority attained by chiropractic is unacceptable, failing to develop over any domain in health care either from external opposition, or from absence of an externally perceived unified voice. The current status is no longer tolerable.

Who will attend, and who should attend? All of those who attend do so as individuals dedicated to the advancement of quality health care for the public and concerned with the current status of delivery. They constitute a diverse spectrum across the majority of the profession, and include integrative interprofessional outreach, reflecting modern societal interactions. Attendees are involved individually and by invitation, without the burden of designation as a representative or delegate of any agency, association, institution or organization.

The steering committee (see below) coalesced out of the members' own commitment and active Internet debate over the challenges facing this profession. Each member is a leader within health care in his or her own right. Together, they have broad experience spanning the scope of the chiropractic profession, its stakeholders and the public.

Chiropractic Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Chair

John J. Triano, DC, PhD, FCCS(c)

Committee Members

Karl C. Kranz, DC, JD

George McClelland, DC

Deborah Kopansky-Giles, DC, FCCS(c)

William Morgan, DC

Craig F. Nelson, MS, DC

James Winterstein, DC

Wayne Jonas, MD

The invited participants are individuals who, in their own professional lives, have breadth of experiences in the various domains of health care as it impacts the delivery of chiropractic care to patients. Each has been nominated based on the following criteria:

Participants have made substantive contributions in one or more of the following areas:

- professional education
- research
- health care policy
- professional association leadership
- writing, editing or comparable contributions to the chiropractic literature

The observers are individuals who have expressed interest in our process and wish to attend and to observe the deliberations.

Participants and observers alike will abide by *a priori* agreement to conditions and rules of attendance that can be found in the form of a guiding document, which is available via the Steering Committee Web site at www.chiropracticstrategicplan.com.

How will the conference be structured? This conference will be conducted using methods of discussion, debate and consensus development that have proven effective and beneficial over time. The method is based on the formal Delphi and Nominal Group processes of consensus development modified for larger groups. It has been successfully implemented on behalf of the chiropractic profession in proceedings, for example, of the Rand Corporation and the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (now AHRQ). Participants in these and other similar processes are also participants of the current meeting, providing continuity of experiences that have been generally considered beneficial to advancing involvement of the profession in quality health care delivery.

1. Structured presentation, debate and consensus building. The focus of this conference is on the requisite criteria for a profession to meet and achieve cultural authority. Invited speakers and content experts on these topics will give structured presentations. Presentations on various models and visions of the chiropractic profession will provide a fodder for debate; however, this conference and its attendees seek not to adjudicate which is superior. Rather, it will pose challenges to proponents that they define how the qualities of each vision meet the tests of and contribute to cultural authority. Finally, a structured "round-robin" formal consensus process using an experienced moderator will ensue leading to the formulation of action steps for a strategic plan.
2. Participation and commentary. Participants will engage in the presentations, debate and consensus process. Observers will have several opportunities to provide comment at structured intervals during the course of the meeting.

Is the conference sponsored? Initial resources for the planning and development of this conference have been obtained through the gracious, in-kind and volunteer work of individuals.

Resources for conducting the conference itself are supplied through donation to a restricted fund through the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research (FCER). Members of the Steering Committee have made solicitations to organizations, associations and individuals, initially without discrimination. On review, the committee has revised its solicitations and has restricted them to individuals, and organizations and associations not affiliated with third-party payment systems. Donations in any amount can be made anonymously to FCER in support of this conference.

Resources are budgeted for covering costs of conducting the conference, including the payment of travel expenses for invited speakers and hardship circumstances for participants, as well as subsequent activities to publish results, work with interested parties/organizations and associations to implement the action steps and respond to related profession needs in the near future.

As noted earlier, participation is not based on representation for any group. On the same basis, the Steering Committee has declined support from organizations and associations who have offered support contingent upon ability to have representation within the participant group in order to take every precaution in maintaining the integrity of process.

What steps will be taken once the conference has concluded? Following the conference, participants are expected to work individually, collectively and in conjunction with interested parties, organizations and associations as change agents to promote quality health care delivery and the action steps necessary to promote cultural authority. Such activity will respect the right and responsibility of any group to pursue evidence regarding social models of the profession through legitimate research methodology in health policy, clinical investigations and/or basic science.

Whom can readers contact for more information? The following steering committee spokespersons are available to answer questions regarding this activity:

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Readers are encouraged to visit www.chiropracticstrategicplan.com for more information.

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