



CHIROPRACTIC (GENERAL)

## Keeping the Flame

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

As each of us gets older, it's important to remind ourselves to look beyond the span of our own short existence. Our measly 60 to 90 years of life are very brief, relatively speaking. Fortunately, we are given the opportunity to decide how much impact those years will have in the future.

When you read the accounts of the chiropractic pioneers, you see a distinct sense of vision toward the future in their actions. These pioneers recognized their responsibility to maintain chiropractic as a distinct profession with a distinct philosophy.

In many respects, those early pioneers were activists. They spread the word about chiropractic to those in their community. They took the time to educate people about how chiropractic was something different than medicine - something better. They lit the chiropractic torch and let it burn as brightly as they possibly could.

More than 110 years have passed since chiropractic's founding. Needless to say, the health care environment we find ourselves in is far from what our pioneers could have imagined. In far too many cases, the doctor-patient relationship has been invaded by some sort of third-party payer who doesn't really seem to have the interest of the patient in mind at all. This unfortunate reality has the potential to negatively affect your relationship with not only your existing patients, but also those potential patients who might want to see a doctor of chiropractic, but are having a hard time getting "permission" from their insurance company, etc.

But for all of the changes that have taken place over the years, one thing remains constant: The importance of your relationship with your patients. The relationships you have with your patients still are the primary method of impacting chiropractic's reputation in your community and around the world. It's also the best way to impact patient referrals.



**By communicating the message of chiropractic, we can impact the health of individuals. But even more significantly, we can teach them about true health and wellness, thereby giving them the basis for making the right health care choices for themselves, their families and those around them.**

When you take the time to cultivate quality patient relationships, you have the opportunity to communicate a positive message about chiropractic, but you do something more: You spread that message to the patient's family, friends and co-workers. Like a ripple in a still pond, your patient tells others about the care he or she received and the doctor who provided it - you. Those ripples can go through generations of the same family or through the place where they work.

Multiply those ripples by a few hundred patients and you've created a community that is pro-chiropractic. All of the members of that community understand the full value of chiropractic and see chiropractic care as the preferred form of care for all but emergency situations. They understand the chiropractic philosophy and choose health through chiropractic.

Every day, millions of consumers see ads touting the latest drugs. Those ads are all telling people the same basic message: Your life will be better with this or that drug. We can't silence those ads, no matter how much we disagree with them. But we can send our own message: Your life will be even better with chiropractic.

This is what we know from our own chiropractic experience. This is what you see in your office every day. It's why you became a chiropractor in the first place, and it's why you continue to do what you do. We need to communicate this message consistently and constantly. We need to make people aware there is a better way to health.

By communicating the message of chiropractic, we can impact the health of individuals. But even more significantly, we can teach them about true health and wellness, thereby giving them the basis for making the right health care choices for themselves, their families and those around them. In this manner, chiropractic truly can impact the health of not just individuals, but also communities and even societies, now and in the future.

The chiropractic torch has been passed to us. We must share the information about chiropractic and keep the torch burning for generations to come.

*DMP Jr.*

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