

A Global Vision of Chiropractic Care, Part 2

MORE Q&A WITH DR. MOLLY MERI ROBINSON, ON STAFF AT THE WHO.

As of January 2009, Molly Meri Robinson, DC, is working full time as a technical officer at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, the first doctor of chiropractic to achieve that distinction. She was offered the one-year position following a student internship in 2008 - also a first for the profession. In part two of this two-part interview (see part 1 in the April 9 issue), she describes some of the ongoing projects she is working on at the WHO and encourages chiropractic students and doctors to get involved in global health promotion.

Tell us about your current responsibilities at the WHO, including activities that could impact the provision and growth of chiropractic and alternative health care worldwide. At WHO today, I have a whole desk full of projects, each uniquely aimed at accomplishing a different goal. Several of the simpler tasks include things like facilitating the translation of the *WHO Guidelines on Basic Training and Safety in Chiropractic* into the remaining official WHO languages, as it is currently available through WHO in English, Spanish and French only. This is a project to be undertaken by WHO in cooperation with the World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) and their partners, but I was able to bring this project to the forefront now, as opposed to being on hold indefinitely.

Other tasks include authoring a chapter for the *World Medicines Situation 2010* document on the current global state of traditional medicine, and efforts to work with other departments in WHO to expand the assistance that the chiropractic profession might be able to offer in all applicable areas of health care.

I believe that these things serve as the essential foundation for the chiropractic profession on the world stage. The efforts of WFC at WHO and in other areas have been of immeasurable value, and I am doing my best to work in concert with those efforts to take us to the next level and fully integrate us into WHO, the largest clearinghouse of health care information and policy support in the world.

How can students/DCs get involved with the WHO, and why should they? Any number of interns are taken into the various programs at WHO every year. The application forms and information about the process are available at www.who.int, and I have tried to also make this information available through the WCCS [World Congress of Chiropractic Students] and SACA [Student American Chiropractic Association] chapter officers. Current employment listings at WHO do not accept a D.C. degree as a qualification, but I am hoping this could change now that they have shown willingness to accept a test case. The easiest way for doctors to get involved at WHO, however, is still through joining and supporting WFC.

Why is the WHO important to chiropractic, and why should DCs care about global health care (beyond general compassion, which all health care providers should have)? WHO is considered to be the center of all health care information in the world, and is used by governments and ministries of health for support as they design their legislation and health care programs. If we, as a profession, are not here, we will not be included or heard. It is in the interest of every doctor of chiropractic in every corner of the world to support the integration of chiropractic into WHO, because I cannot see how we could be our own voice on a comparable level if we fail to take the

initiative to join; or worse, insist upon being separate. We need to care about global health care because, in the end, global health care is just the network of providers seeing individual patients, and that is who we are.

Anything else you'd like to add? I am amazingly grateful to the network of individuals and organizations who make this work possible. I simply could not have done it alone. I have benefitted from the experience and advice of individuals such as Dr. J. Michael Flynn, David Chapman-Smith, and Dr. Louis Sportelli, without whom I would have made far more mistakes than I am currently accountable for; and also my father, Richard Robinson, who taught me by example that there are very few things that hard work can't do. The work here at WHO would also not be possible without the generous financial support of NCMIC, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, Standard Process and the WFC.

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