

Funding the Future of the Profession

ONGOING NIH GRANTS ARE ENABLING OUR COLLEGES TO FUND RESEARCH, IMPROVE CURRICULUM AND BETTER PREPARE STUDENTS.

Editorial Staff

As one door closes, another door truly does open; if you need proof, look no further than the more than \$5 million in recent grant awards received by three chiropractic colleges courtesy of the [National Institutes of Health](#). On the heels of the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research's announcement that it would soon close its doors, the grants provide strong evidence that chiropractic research and education are alive and well and that chiropractic educational institutions such as Palmer College of Chiropractic, Northwestern Health Sciences University and Western States Chiropractic College - all recipients of the recent NIH awards - are increasingly positioned to better serve their students and the profession.

The [Wolfe-Harris Center for Clinical Studies](#) at Northwestern Health Sciences University (NHSU) will receive more than \$3 million from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the NIH in the form of two three-year grants: the first (\$1.65 million) to conduct "Chiropractic and Exercise for Low Back Pain in Adolescents" and the second (\$1.6 million) to conduct "Chiropractic and Exercise Management of Spinal Dysfunction in Seniors." Participant recruitment for both studies is expected to begin next year.

"We are extremely proud of the groundbreaking research being done at the Wolfe-Harris Center for Clinical Studies," said Mark Zeigler, DC, president of Northwestern. "For nearly two decades our world-renowned research team has been an international leader in conducting research intended to develop new models of evidence-informed, patient-centered care."



The Palmer grant, a three-year, \$1.3 million award from the HRSA, will be utilized by the [Palmer Center for Chiropractic Research](#) to fund "Co-Management of Older Adults With Low Back Pain by Medical Doctors and Doctors of Chiropractic." According to the college, the study will evaluate the extent to which Medicare patients are using chiropractic and medical services for low back pain; develop a multidisciplinary model for patient-centered collaborative care between MDs and DCs in an older adult population with subacute or chronic low back pain; and conduct a pilot study to evaluate the clinical effectiveness of the collaborative care model.

Christine Goertz, DC, PhD, Palmer's vice chancellor for research and health policy and principal investigator of the study, and other researchers at the Palmer Center will collaborate with researchers at the Genesis Quad Cities Family Medicine Residency Program, the College of Public Health at the University of Iowa, the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, the University of Iowa Center on Aging, and the College of Health Professions at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

"Currently, there are few examples and little scientific study of care coordination between medical doctors and doctors of chiropractic for low back pain, and nothing that specifically targets adults above the age of 65," said Dr. Goertz. "This study will begin to address this critical gap in the literature."

Last but not least, [Western States Chiropractic College](#) has announced it has received an NIH education grant that will provide the college with \$800,000 over the next four years. Titled "Evidence-Based Practice II: Faculty & Curriculum Development," this CAM Practitioner Research Education Project Grant Partnership Competitive Renewal (R25) [education grant](#) is a continuation of a project undertaken at Western States in 2001 using a \$700,000 grant.

According to the college, the ongoing project involves "re-shaping and strengthening the entire

curriculum to make our graduates more 'evidence-based practice' ready. This means the goal is to give our students the tools so that they will be adept at posing a patient-based clinical question, have effective strategies to find the best available evidence to answer their question, assess the quality of that evidence (e.g., separate the good from the bad and the ugly), and finally, [combining] the research evidence with their own clinical experience [to] decide what to do with the patient."

"It is important for the chiropractic physician to be able to access and appraise scientific evidence relevant to practice. The Western States Chiropractic College team, in collaboration with our colleagues from Oregon Health & Science University, look forward to continuing our endeavor to enhance chiropractic education towards this goal," said Mitchell Haas, DC, dean of research. "We wish to thank NIH/NCCAM for their continuing support of our program."

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