

ACA President Testifies Before Senate VA Affairs Committee on Need for Access to Chiropractic

The [American Chiropractic Association](#) (ACA) has been at the forefront of educating the public and Congress on the benefits of chiropractic care for veterans. To that end, the ACA fully supports S. 1204, the Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act, said ACA President Dr. Rick McMichael at a U.S. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Hearing on Oct. 21.

Military service men and women need to rely on access to treatment for painful and disabling joint and back disorders and be provided the highest level of care possible Dr. McMichael said in testimony before the committee on [S. 1204, legislation introduced by Sen. Patty Murray \(D-Wash\)](#). According to recent U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs statistics, nearly 52 percent of service men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are seeking care due to musculoskeletal ailments including back and joint pain, which is commonly caused by injuries from combat, heavy gear, motor vehicle accidents, and blast injuries. Dr. McMichael noted that doctors of chiropractic offer expert conservative care, but more is needed.

"Without a congressional directive, further expansion to Veterans Administration facilities will happen only on a case-by-case basis and more than likely will be excruciatingly slow," he said.

Chiropractic care [has been available within the Veterans Administration](#) (VA) system for many years, but Congress took action when it became apparent that the VA had failed to take any reasonable steps to provide veterans with chiropractic care and pushed for chiropractic care to be integrated into 36 major treatment facilities. Despite this progress, Dr. McMichael stated, there is still an overwhelming majority of veterans denied access to chiropractic care at approximately 120 major VA facilities.

"Clearly, the need for expanded access to doctors of chiropractic and their high-touch care has never been more crucial," said McMichael. "Veterans want, need and deserve access to chiropractic care, and our goal should be to ensure that chiropractic is available and accessible at every major Veterans Administration health care facility. We encourage this Congress to pass the Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act."

Source: American Chiropractic Association