

We Get Letters & E-Mail

We Have Become Our Own Worst Enemy

Dear Editor:

I recently read a letter to the editor titled "Chiropractors Eating Their Own" [Aug. 12 DC]. I am glad I did and would like to add to the doctor's comments. Here in Utah, we have a managed care group owned by chiropractors who have done just what she was talking about. They have undercut our reimbursement to such ridiculous levels that many of us are now struggling to stay alive. (If you live and practice in the intermountain area where they have contracts, you know who I am talking about.)

We had problems several years ago when we were routinely given anywhere from 4-8 visits to treat any and all conditions, no matter how severe or chronic. These limitations were placed on us by chiropractors who review the cases. When asking for extended visits, we were allowed two or three more. We have taken hit after hit as this group continued to agree to lower and lower fee schedules in order to maintain their contracts. The owners of this company (all chiropractors), have reaped the benefits of this; they have become wealthy on the sweat and tears of their fellow DCs.

Since the company holds the contracts for most of the major insurance companies in our area, it is very difficult to not join their group. However, in so doing, they charge you a substantial fee and then they take a 10-15 percent cut of the already significantly reduced fee that you are paid out of every check you receive. As such, we are now reimbursed about 50-60 percent of our submitted fees. This doesn't leave much to pay your bills and support a family.

I don't know what the answer is to this, but I don't think our national associations have done enough to help, and unless there is a major change with national health insurance or with our chiropractic associations taking aim at these groups, I fear you will see many in our ranks going out of business at the hands of our greedy colleagues. Time and again, we have become our own worst enemy.

Name withheld by request

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