

Help Reverse Boy Scouts Policy That Discriminates Against Chiropractic

Mario Spoto, DC

Today there are more than 60,000 doctors of chiropractic licensed in the United States. Many of those DCs are also active leaders in the Boy Scouts, have children who are in local troops, and were scouts themselves. In addition, for more than 22 years, DCs have provided scouts with physical evaluations to ensure they are healthy and fit enough to fully enjoy the scouting experience. Doctors of chiropractic and [the Boy Scouts](#) have had a long and successful relationship, so I was disturbed to learn that as of January 2010, the 22-year legacy of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and the chiropractic profession will be cast aside by a new policy that discriminates against chiropractic by prohibiting DCs from performing the mandatory physical evaluations required of all scouts. The new policy will allow only medical doctors, osteopaths, nurse practitioners or physician's assistants to perform these exams.

As chairman of the [American Chiropractic Association](#) (ACA) Board of Governors, I am asking all doctors of chiropractic to act. We simply cannot allow a policy like this - supported by no evidence - to be implemented. We cannot allow BSA to erase the two decades of good service that doctors of chiropractic have provided to the Boy Scouts.

For its part, ACA has been hard at work trying to make the BSA leadership understand the profession's position. We have sent two letters to BSA detailing our concerns and documenting why doctors of chiropractic are in fact qualified to perform the exams. ACA has requested the policy be restored to recognize the state-authorized ability of DCs to provide physicals.

The [National Board of Chiropractic Examiners](#) (NBCE) and [National University of Health Sciences](#) (NUHS) have also sent letters in opposition to this policy, clearly identifying qualifications of doctors of chiropractic to perform annual physical examinations. NUHS even extended an invitation to BSA leadership to take part in classes at its facility to learn more about chiropractic education.

Clearly, our national organizations are doing their part; but as individual DCs, we can still do ours. The key to our success lies in recruiting all doctors of chiropractic, friends, allies, and supporters at the community level to stand up and let the Boy Scouts know its policy change must be reversed.

To help in this effort, ACA has developed an e-mail letter for individual DCs that can be sent directly to BSA to help persuade its leadership that the decision to reverse the policy and once again allow DCs to perform physical examinations is the right one. We cannot let BSA undermine the credibility we have earned among the scouting community.

I encourage every DC - and your chiropractic patients - to contact Boy Scouts of America and request that its policy regarding doctors of chiropractic be changed immediately. Visit the ACA Web site at www.acatoday.org/letters/bsa.cfm to send our letter. It's easy; all you have to do is type in your name, state and e-mail address, and then click a button. Make your voice count.

