

## Your Profession Needs Your Help

Michael Flynn, DC

*Think of yourself as on the threshold of unparalleled success. A whole, clear, glorious life lies before you. Achieve! Achieve! -- Andrew Carnegie*

Something significant is happening in our country. These are historic times and the spotlight on health care is unprecedented. We should all be paying close attention because chiropractic may be poised for widespread acceptance and access. Why? Because chiropractic is an effective preventive treatment that can save millions, possibly billions, of dollars in health care costs. What is unclear is the level to which our nation's leaders will embrace reasonable change in any "new" health care system.

The reform debate should have a focus on health and wellness principles as one significant way to bring down spiraling costs. That focus should have our attention and the commitment of each of us to make certain our profession is heard and included in the discussions.

As a profession, we need to seize this moment by supporting actions to improve chiropractic's position in the health care marketplace. For the first time, we have chiropractic leaders sitting down at [summit meetings](#) and putting their heads together to create a crucial unified front for chiropractic. The profession had better be together, as it is going to be a tough battle, but one that must be fought for patients' rights. If the profession can stand determined, together we can cross the threshold to greater recognition of the value of chiropractic care.

In any health care system that results from reform efforts, patients must have access to the doctor of their choice, without reservation. Nondiscrimination among providers and their services is a core issue. At the same time, chiropractors deserve fair reimbursement that reflects their effectiveness in outcomes and cost savings.

Thorough and responsible accounting would place chiropractic's value in the top tier of health care choices in terms of prevention and wellness. Doctors of chiropractic deserve to be among the most respected in health care. Are we paying attention? We need to do so, because we have never been closer.

Almost four years ago, the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress (FCP) was created with a single mission: to realize more positive press for chiropractic. Visit the [foundation's Web site](#) at [www.f4cp.com](http://www.f4cp.com), where you will learn how much the foundation has accomplished in bringing attention to the hands-on active care value of chiropractic.

In particular, don't miss the recently released [Mercer report](#) (you can [find it at the Web site](#)) that speaks authoritatively to the dramatic cost savings and effectiveness of chiropractic care. Prepared by two distinguished medical researchers, it is believed that this new study will be an extremely useful document to deflect claims that adding nondiscrimination language to legislation would cost billions of dollars. The foundation had this report hand-delivered to every member of Congress. The report will also be available to national and state associations to inform consumers, legislative bodies, businesses and the health care industry that chiropractic is deserving of greater access and

fair reimbursement.

Pick up any paper, listen to the radio, turn on the TV; health care is the big story. The foundation is getting the chiropractic message to the public and in front of key decision-makers. It is also bringing its positive message to Main Street America: Chiropractors have been the stalwarts of prevention and wellness for a long time. Since January 2009, the foundation has tracked more than 300 million positive impressions of the profession in print, radio and TV, not counting the current media blitz in Washington, D.C. Plans for 2010 include a "50 states in 50 weeks" campaign [as reported in *DC*]; the foundation will be placing half-page ads in every state capitol newspaper.

Kent Greenawalt had this vision four years ago and got the foundation off the ground. He brought in stakeholders, college presidents, vendor CEOs, and association representatives to serve on the board. His efforts have been aided by Joe and Laura Carabello, who have donated the public relations and marketing expertise of their 25-year-old firm, [CPR Strategic Marketing Communications](#), because they are patients of chiropractic and wanted to be of help. The foundation also thanks retired General Becky Halstead, who has immense respect and appreciation for the results she achieved with chiropractic care and who has helped spread the word during the foundation's ongoing media blitz in Washington, D.C.

The foundation is also running ads with soon-to-be NFL Hall of Famer Jerry Rice and ads referencing the 10-year study that showed marked decrease in overall health care costs with patients under chiropractic care. All of the foundation's national ads have been developed into 18x24 full-color posters for internal marketing.

Thanks to the 1,000 monthly contributors, vendor friends, chiropractic colleges, and the state associations that contribute to the foundation, making possible the considerable media buy of almost \$1 million for September through November (announced in the Sept. 23 issue of *DC*). The FCP media blitz has been extended through January 2010 by the FCP board.

Now is the time to keep this incredible momentum going, but we need more support from doctors, faculty and students of chiropractic; those who should be most involved in the success of the foundation. They have to be paying attention. Even with less than 2 percent of the profession behind the foundation thus far, the difference being made is remarkable. Imagine what more can be achieved when this percentage grows.

A monthly contribution at whatever level you are comfortable giving is the help that is needed to continue this positive message campaign. Supporting the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress should not be an afterthought or a hard sell. You can add your name to the growing list of doctors and students who are paying attention and determined in this critical time in our country's and profession's history to make a difference. Sign up at the FCP Web site or call (985) 872-5072 to make your pledge. Do it today for a better tomorrow!

JANUARY 2010