

NUHS Helping Prepare New Mexico DCs for Limited Prescription Powers

Several individual state chiropractic associations contacted experts at National University of Health Sciences (NUHS) and asked them to assess what additional training would be required to prepare chiropractic physicians to have a license to prescribe from a limited formulary of drugs. Top NUHS faculty in pharmacology and chiropractic medicine examined and compared curricula from allopathic medical schools in addition to a wide range of medical specialty schools, such as: osteopathic medical schools, schools of podiatry, dentistry, psychology and those training nurse practitioners. Each of these professions has also recently been granted authority to prescribe medications from a limited formulary.

NUHS determined that chiropractic physicians would need 90 hours of pharmacology in addition to the prerequisite physiology and biochemistry courses already required by accredited chiropractic education programs. (The DC program at NUHS already provides students with these 90 hours in pharmacology, but such requirements are not representative of all chiropractic institutions.)

At the same time it was compiling its review, NUHS also launched an accredited Master of Science in Advanced Clinical Practice degree program. In anticipation that an expanded scope of chiropractic care would be part of the future, [the MSACP program](#) incorporated the 90 hours of advanced pharmacology coursework as part of its degree requirements as well.

One state, New Mexico, has already passed new regulations allowing chiropractic physicians with the right licensure and training to [prescribe drugs](#) from a limited formulary. The New Mexico Chiropractic Association asked NUHS if it would be willing to offer post-graduate coursework in Albuquerque delivering a 90-hour program in pharmacology to chiropractic physicians wanting to practice under the new expanded scope of care.

Teaching the New Mexico program is Dr. Daniel Richardson, assistant dean at NUHS, who holds a PhD in Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy from Loyola University, Stritch School of Medicine. Said Dr. Richardson: "At the end of each module, the physicians must pass an examination. At the conclusion of the course, they must also pass a comprehensive examination given by the state association in order to be eligible to apply for a license and a DEA number."

The physicians in the New Mexico program also receive training in injectable nutrients and drugs from Dr. Michael Taylor, a chiropractic physician who also holds a diplomate from the American Board of Chiropractic Internists.

More states are thinking about expanding the scope of practice for chiropractic physicians. In fact, several physicians attending the New Mexico program come from other states, in hope that they will be prepared for the future. Because of this growing interest, NUHS is also thinking about offering its MSACP in New Mexico as well, and is strategizing how to deliver similar programs in other states in the future.

"Chiropractic physicians are already licensed as primary care doctors in most states," said [Dr. James Winterstein](#), president of NUHS. "As health care policy-makers wrestle with the scarcity of

general practice physicians, expanding the scope of chiropractic care to qualified chiropractic physicians makes good economic and strategic sense. New Mexico's citizens will undoubtedly benefit from broadening health care delivery by chiropractic physicians, and we anticipate that more states will see the wisdom in this as well."

Source: National University of Health Sciences