

# Congratulations to the Chiropractic Health Care Section on 15 Years

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In 1995, the same year the chiropractic profession turned 100 years old, a new adventure for chiropractors began: The American Public Health Association (APHA) approved the creation of an official section for APHA members. That new section was the Chiropractic Health Care (CHC) section. Fifteen years have passed since that momentous year and this section remains the only APHA section to include both the words "health" and "care" in its title. CHC section members have shown great care in the interest of the public's health.

The first 10 years of the section's history were published in 2006. The years of struggle prior to 1995 to gain access to APHA and overturn anti-chiropractic APHA policies were also described earlier by Vear in 1987. For deeper context, see those earlier articles, as chiropractors have been active in APHA for more than 30 years. This brief article will celebrate highlights of some of the successes and activities of the CHC and its members over the past five years.

In 2005, the World Health Organization released [guidelines for chiropractic education](#) to help inform countries considering chiropractic licensure. As a founding CHC section member and chair of the World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) Public Health Committee, I gave input and suggestions to WHO for these chiropractic guidelines, most of which were incorporated in the final document.

In 2006, CHC member and current Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE) chair-elect Dr. Joe Brimhall, serving as president of the CCE, oversaw the CCE Task Force on Accreditation Improvement, which led to the refinement of [wellness competencies in chiropractic education](#). Several CHC members filled important roles within APHA and its affiliates. Dr. Lisa Killinger was appointed secretary of the APHA Task Force on Aging, and Dr. Mitch Haas served as president of the APHA affiliated Oregon Public Health Association and also completed a multi-year term as a member of the APHA bylaws committee (where he would serve again from 2007-2009).

In 2007, for the first time, all candidates for APHA national office personally addressed the CHC section during the APHA Annual Meeting, a sign of the growing maturity of the section. In 2008, ACA Committee on APHA members (and CHC section members) Dr. John Pammer and I (Dr. Baird), as well as Dr. Bill Pfeifer and ACA staff, authored a resolution that ultimately was passed by the ACA House of Delegates and Board of Governors. This states, in part: "The ACA House of Delegates hereby reaffirms its support for the APHA and issues this 2008 resolution encouraging all ACA members and all Doctors of Chiropractic to join and maintain membership and become active in the APHA henceforth."

Also in 2008, Dr. Gary Auerbach, original founder of the WFC and member of the WFC Public Health Committee, was commended for his efforts by the CHC for bringing to APHA's attention the need to encourage President Obama to bring to the Senate for consideration the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Dr. Auerbach's efforts led to a letter by APHA President Georges Benjamin to President Obama, urging support of this important global public health measure.

The *Journal of Manipulative and Physiologic Therapeutics (JMPT)*, edited by CHC member Dr. Claire Johnson, also began publication of an annual issue focused on public health in 2008. This issue was published to coincide with the APHA Annual Meeting, where it was featured at the CHC section booth to be available to APHA meeting participants. As the APHA meeting has more than 10,000 participants, the opportunity to highlight chiropractic/public health research is critical.

In 2009, APHA Executive Director Dr. Georges Benjamin spoke at the [WFC Biennial Congress in Montreal](#). This was a watershed moment in the efforts of many to help enhance understanding and appreciation of public health among chiropractors. Also in 2009, three chiropractic college presidents took a stand on behalf of the chiropractic profession, students, colleges, and the public's health. Dr. John Scaringe of Southern California University of Health Sciences, Dr. Frank Nicchi of New York Chiropractic College, and Dr. Joe Brimhall of the University of Western States each began to automatically enroll students as members of APHA when they begin their public health studies at their institutions.

Because of the vision of these presidents, the CHC section will have both a secured presence and a greater voting and policy-shaping voice within APHA. More students will thereby be exposed to mainstream public-health activities and have the opportunity to become active in public health. Because of their efforts and vision, these three presidents were each given a "Special Award for Advancing Public Health and Chiropractic" from the CHC section in 2009.

In 2009, the CHC also emphasized hand- and table-sanitation protocols, spearheaded by CHC member Will Evans. His efforts and those of his co-workers (most of whom are CHC members), have led to the issue being considered by the American Chiropractic Association's House of Delegates.

Another 2009 highlight included the publication of a new public-health textbook edited by two long-time CHC leaders, Michael Haneline and William Meeker. The text, *Introduction to Public Health for Chiropractors* published by Jones & Bartlett Publishers, includes chapters written by many CHC section members. The hope is to bring usable public health information to members of the chiropractic profession, to meet and encourage what may be the profession's growing awareness of public health.

In 2010, the early highlight was the ACC-RAC theme: public health. This conference, with CHC member Dr. Claire Johnson serving as peer-review chair, featured a variety of practical information for chiropractors related to public health, from geriatrics and fall prevention, to a fascinating concluding plenary on "Subluxation and Public Health," highlighting different viewpoints. At the opening session, attendees were addressed by Dr. Georges Benjamin, who discussed prevention and the role chiropractic might play in musculoskeletal public health concerns.

Later in 2010, Dr. Paul Dougherty as CHC section chair and member of the U.S. Bone and Joint Decade Executive Board, helped oversee the CHC section's first official policy submission to APHA on the public-health burden of musculoskeletal disease. This is part of the process of APHA recognizing the importance of this facet of public health. The CHC section has been able to represent the chiropractic profession well in promoting this issue and awareness within APHA. While the policy did not pass the first round, it will be refined and resubmitted. It is a fitting culmination to 15 years within APHA that the section would begin to not only comment on APHA policy, but also to submit and shape it.

As is clear, the CHC section and its membership have worked both within and outside the chiropractic profession to advance chiropractic and public health together. If you would like to participate with us in public health, consider joining APHA at [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org) (click "join," and don't

forget to select "Chiropractic Health Care section" as your primary section affiliation). Contact Membership Chair Dr. Jonathon Egan ([j.t.egan@gmail.com](mailto:j.t.egan@gmail.com)) with any questions. The past five years have seen great accomplishments for chiropractic in public health. Come join us for the next 50.

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