

The Expanding Chiropractic Practice

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The average chiropractic practice in the United States is changing as the trend that found doctors adding new products and services to their chiropractic practice continues at a pace similar to that in 2009.

An e-mail survey conducted in July, 2009 found that 55% of those DCs surveyed expected to increase the products and services they offered to their patients.¹ A follow-up survey conducted two years later found pattern continuing with 54% of DCs expecting to increase the products and services they offered to their patients.²

<iframe width="468" height="263" src="http://www.youtube.com/embed/ywxEX85snl8?rel=0" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>

To view the entire library of *Dynamic Chiropractic* videos, click [here](#).

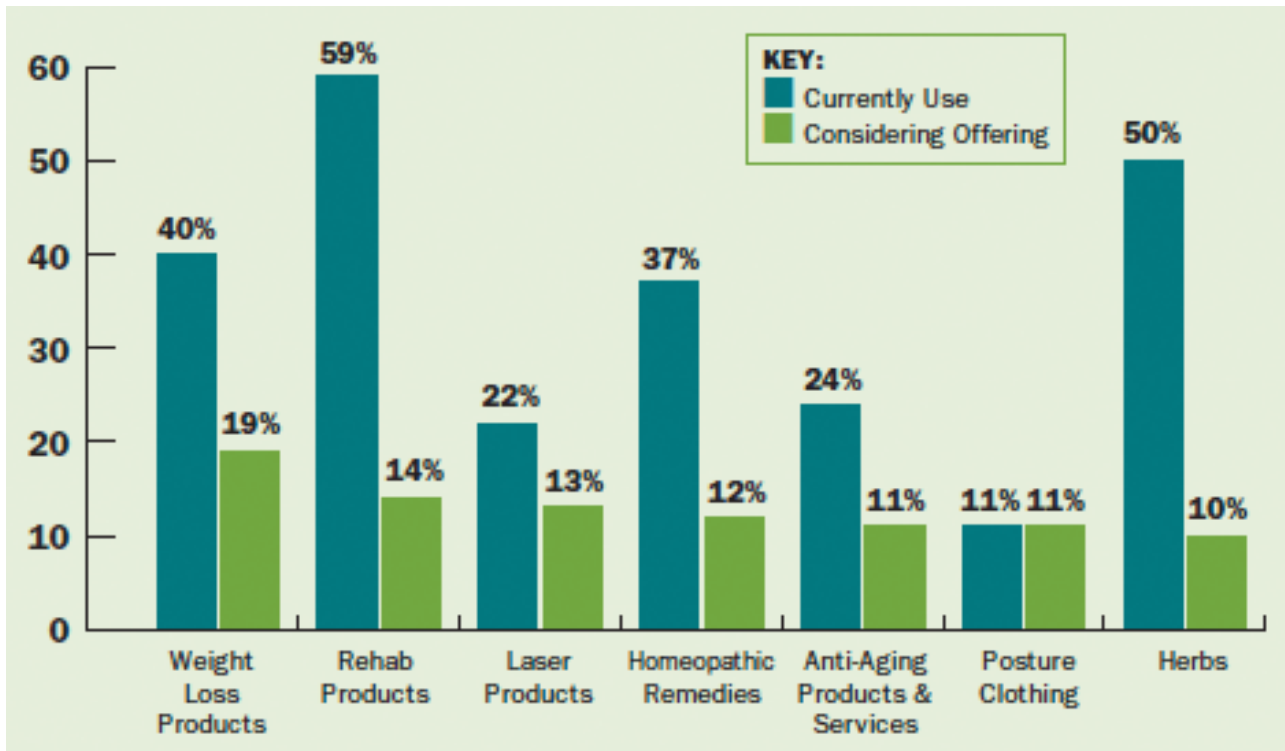
When asked why doctors should introduce new products and services to their patients, survey participant Michael M. Stelzer, DC, DACNB, CCSP of San Antonio, Texas noted:

"It's important as we grow our clinical skill set and discover more tools to use that we utilize said tools in an appropriate fashion to achieve better clinical outcomes. The business end is irrelevant: taking care of patients well and then improving upon that outcome will always improve the bottom line."

The survey found that approximately a third of DCs who participated offer products to "almost all" of their patients, with 56% offering products to half or more. The trend towards offering products to patients increases with experience and years in practice. The longer in practice, the more patients they offer products to.

Tom Klapp, DC, of Ann Arbor, MI, who has been in practice for more than 30 years, commented that "Products and services are an ever-expanding, ever-evolving source of benefit for both the patient and doctor."

There are a number of product and services that a significant percentage of doctors report that they are considering adding to their practice in the future. Some of these represent a significant increase in the percentage of DCs already offering these products and services:



The decision by more DCs to offer weight loss products to their patients coincides with the increasing overweight and obesity problem in the United States. Doctors are recognizing the impact on patient health and looking for ways to address it. As Suzanne Fratto Hopstock, DC of La Puente, CA says "patients look to us for help, sometimes that help is found in a product to augment chiropractic care."

Likewise, as the demand for anti-aging products and services increase more doctors will be looking for natural ways to extend vitality and youthfulness. This could potentially spark an interest in offering aesthetic products and services in the future.

Other products, such as rehab, laser and homeopathic remedies reflect natural choices to increase recovery, combat pain and increase wellness. With half of the profession embracing their use and another 10% looking to add them to their practice, herbs could potentially rival nutritional supplements in the next decade.

New Offerings

The interest in posture clothing is new on the scene. With two vendors currently serving the chiropractic profession, the current use of posture clothing could climb significantly in the next few years.

When asked what other products or services they currently offer or would like to offer to their patients, a number of doctors mentioned: acupuncture, nutritional counseling, exercise tools and spa products. Mike Graves, DC, of Washington Terrace, UT offers new products and services to his patients "to give them the tools to control their own health. When they are in control, they are more willing to work at it.

Not every DC is interested in adding new products and services to their practice. The decision to expand will likely be based on both practice style and chiropractic philosophy.

But the trend is thus far consistent and appears to be providing significant benefits to both patients and practice. Vincent Pankonin, DC of Perham, MN has found that "to offer new services and products gives patients and prospective patients another reason to come to my clinic."

References

1. What Chiropractors USE & NEED for Their Practices and Their Patients. MPA Media, July 6, 2009.
2. The Expanding Chiropractic Practice. MPA Media, December 7, 2011.