

A Seat at the Chronic Pain Table

F4CP REPRESENTS CHIROPRACTIC AT CHRONIC PAIN CONFERENCE.

Editorial Staff

Carol Ann Malizia, DC, and Sherri McAllister, DC, represented the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress and chiropractic at the National Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Association (NFMCPA) and International Myopain Society's (IMS) Treating and Preventing Chronic Pain Conference. The two-day conference featured an invitation-only round table, with participants from government, regulatory and private sectors convening to discuss the value of collaborative strategies including chiropractic care.

In addition to having a seat at the round table, the F4CP representatives - Dr. McAllister is executive vice president of the foundation and Dr. Malizia is a member of the F4CP board of directors - "participated in the sessions, which included patients, and communicated the value of chiropractic and integrative care in successfully addressing chronic pain. ... We were honored to deliver this message to so many people who are in pain and can benefit from our non-invasive, drug-free approach to care."

"Through our growing collaboration with both the NFMCPA and the IMS, the foundation will play an important role in building patient confidence and trust in chiropractic care," they added. "The NFMCPA has more than 200,000 patients in its community, and we anticipate that DCs nationwide will be positioned to serve these individuals."

[Jan Chambers](#), president of the NFMCPA, provided further details regarding the conference and why chiropractic's presence is essential in an exclusive Q&A with *Dynamic Chiropractic* just days before the event:

Why is it important that chiropractic is represented at this important conference? The Treating & Preventing Chronic Pain Conference 2015 was developed to share information with both patients and clinicians regarding the importance of integrative care in the treatment of fibromyalgia and chronic pain. Chiropractic is a strong component of integrative care, and educating both of these groups about how it can play an important role in helping to improve pain symptoms and functionality is part of the NFMCPA and IMS message.

Has chiropractic been represented previously at the event (either by a chiropractic organization or DC attendees)? The Treating and Preventing Chronic Pain Conference 2015 is an inaugural event, and it is the first time the NFMCPA and the IMS have collaborated to hold a conference relevant to both clinicians and patients. This is a unique opportunity for each of these groups to learn and share perspectives from both sides of the spectrum in one setting. Throughout the 22-year history of the International Myopain Society, chiropractic members have shared their science at the IMS Congress, an international research event held every two years. The IMS encourages the relevance of integrative medicine in its materials, and chiropractic is a component of that message.

Why does fibromyalgia lend itself to an integrative approach (perhaps more than other conditions)? Fibromyalgia is unique in the chronic pain spectrum because it is pain plus illness. As an example, low back pain can negatively impact the quality of life for people living with this condition, but it is

usually because of the pain itself. For people with fibromyalgia in addition to body-wide pains, they must deal with a variety of other medical conditions that can include an overall flu-like feeling, irritable bowel syndrome, painful bladder syndrome, skin rashes, problems with sensitivities such as loud noises, bright lights, perfume or other odors, cold and heat, and the list continues. Plus, these patients are often shunned by treating HCPs who do not recognize fibromyalgia as a viable medical condition.

These issues have made integrative medicine one of the main focuses of alerting both patients and clinicians that treating fibromyalgia is a three-pronged approach which combines:

- Medications appropriately prescribed by a knowledgeable healthcare provider
- Alternative symptom management that includes choices of chiropractic, cognitive behavior therapy, exercise, mindfulness, yoga, and other scientifically proven remedies
- Counseling to help people with a chronic pain condition learn how to live a better health care quality of life

Science has shown repeatedly that this biopsychosocial approach is the best protocol for successful management of fibromyalgia. Relying on any one of these elements alone will not suffice to give the patient the best possible outcome for her or his illness.

Editor's Note: To learn more about the National Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Association, the International Myopain Society and the Treating and Preventing Chronic Pain Conference, visit www.fmcpaware.org and www.myopain.org.

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