



PUBLIC HEALTH

## "Stop the Bleed": Another Chance to Make a Difference

Karen Konarski-Hart, DC, FACO, FICC, EMT

Unfortunately, in today's world we may be faced with emergencies or even disasters that call on us to act outside our daily clinical routines. Involvement may be voluntary or may be suddenly thrust upon us. Our ability and willingness to respond define who we are as individuals and as a profession.

In a [recent DC article](#), I discussed voluntary training for doctors of chiropractic to form a screening team for accidental or intentional radiation exposure.<sup>1</sup> We are ideally suited to fill that emergency response niche because our basic education allows us to understand and respect radiation, but also be able to screen and reassure concerned citizens.

Another public service program is available to us, as well as the general public. "[Stop the Bleed](#)" is a training program originally formulated in response to the increase in active shooters and terrorism, but it is also applicable to industrial, agricultural or sporting accidents. It has been determined that in most cases of injury with hemorrhage, the victims who survived did so because of the action of bystanders.

Trauma is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States for individuals between the ages of 1-45. Roughly 20 percent of U.S. trauma deaths might be preventable if appropriate and timely medical care is delivered following injury. This equates to nearly 30,000 preventable deaths annually.<sup>2</sup>



Like CPR, immediate intervention dramatically increases the viability of those injured. Using techniques refined by the military, ordinary citizens can respond with appropriate interventions and save lives.

Recently the Arkansas Chiropractic Physicians Association offered the Stop the Bleed course to doctors in attendance at its spring conference. They reviewed possible scenarios, assessment and actions to arrest life-threatening bleeding using a variety of techniques. Little Rock's Metro Emergency Medical Services (MEMS) provided the equipment for all doctors to participate in hands-on training.

Participants honed their skills, confidence and willingness to respond to a potential incident. Regardless of their personal practice style or philosophy, all participating doctors have enhanced their value in their communities and are a positive reflection on the profession of chiropractic.

Stop the Bleed is a national program. An online search of your specific state will yield a list of available training sites near you, or you can arrange for a trainer to provide a program for your professional or community organization.

First aid has evolved. Even in emergency medicine, what was acceptable in the mid-1990s has significantly changed, such that tourniquet application and wound packing are now taught to ordinary citizens. Schools receive training and government grants toward hemorrhage response kits. As health care providers, we should at least be cognizant of these changes, and at best, be qualified to respond to a need. Plus, [accreditation standards](#) for chiropractic educational programs require the ability to address public health issues and to communicate interprofessionally.<sup>3</sup>

As with radiation screening, Stop the Bleed is another public health program that needs and welcomes participants, especially those with existing health care skills. Conversations with state public health departments or local first responders can often reveal other programs that can forge

bonds between doctors of chiropractic and the public, as well as establish interprofessional relationships. In working toward the common goal of public health and safety, we are teammates for the community.

*Author's Note:* If you are interested in becoming an instructor in Stop The Bleed for your community, please contact me at [karen@konarskiclinic.com](mailto:karen@konarskiclinic.com) with "STB instructor" as the subject line.

### *References*

1. Konarski-Hart K. "DCs Step Up as Radiation Emergency Screeners." *Dynamic Chiropractic*, January 2019.
2. BleedingControl.org. Instructor Resources:  
<https://www.bleedingcontrol.org/private/materials>.
3. Council on Chiropractic Education. *CCE Accreditation Standards: Principles, Processes and Requirements for Accreditation*. Meta-competency 3 and Meta-competency 8.

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