

## ACA Meets With Wal-Mart

Editorial Staff

ARLINGTON, Va. - The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) says it has developed "a new working relationship" with Wal-Mart following a Dec. 12, 2002, meeting with the retail giant. According to the ACA, Wal-Mart's benefit design team is currently at work on its 2004 plan for employee coverage, and welcomes the ACA's input.

Last year, Wal-Mart announced its decision to drop chiropractic from employee benefits starting Jan. 1, 2003, a decision that affects 85 percent of employees enrolled in the company's PPO (See "Largest Private U.S. Employer Axes Chiropractic," online at [www.chiroweb.com/archives/20/25/20.html](http://www.chiroweb.com/archives/20/25/20.html)).

"They [Wal-Mart] want to develop a long-term relationship with us," asserted ACA President Dr. Daryl Wills, who attended the meeting with ACA executives Patricia Jackson, vice president; Dr. James Edwards, chairman; and Dr. George McClelland, executive committee member.

At the meeting, Wal-Mart officials reportedly told the ACA that the company's data indicated that chiropractic treatments increased health insurance costs. The ACA countered by presenting research documenting that chiropractic actually reduces health care expenditures, by reducing the need for prescription drugs or acute care.

"While numerous research studies have shown chiropractic care to be appropriate, cost-effective and less invasive than a number of traditional medical interventions," said Dr. Edwards, "losing chiropractic as a core benefit will be a deterrent for employee utilization. ACA will work with Wal-Mart to ensure paid health care options for employees who choose nonsurgical and drug-free care."

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### NBCE in the News

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners has announced that individuals eligible for veterans' benefits may now receive full reimbursement for NBCE examination fees, as part of the Veterans Affairs GI Bill allowing veterans to be reimbursed for licensing and certification tests.

"The staff of the National Board has been working for more than a year to make this program available by satisfying many government requirements," noted NBCE President Dr. Peter Ferguson. "We are very pleased to now be able to offer this valuable benefit to eligible candidates."

Veterans who took NBCE Parts I-IV and the optional Physiotherapy Exam and Special Purposes Examination for Chiropractic (SPEC) on or after March 1, 2001, qualify for the reimbursement. Before applying, veterans must establish their eligibility through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), then contact the NBCE Processing Department at [processing@nbce.org](mailto:processing@nbce.org).

In other news, the NBCE convened the inaugural meeting of its Acupuncture Test Committee in early November. At the meeting, the board developed and selected exam questions for the March and November tests. The elective Acupuncture Exam will be offered with other written exams at 20

chiropractic colleges starting in March. Not all chiropractic colleges offer the acupuncture coursework; those that do offer it as an elective course.

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#### Logan Chairman Earns Teaching Award

Gary Casper, DC, DACBR, professor and chair of the Logan College Chiropractic Science Division, recently received the 2002 Missouri Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Dr. Casper was one of 65 faculty members at Missouri postsecondary educational institutions honored at a Dec. 4 awards presentation at the state capital in Jefferson City.

A graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic, Dr. Casper joined the Logan faculty in 1988 after a residency at the Logan Radiology Department. He has been chairman of the Chiropractic Science Division since 1990, and was recently re-elected to a new three-year term.

Casper holds diplomate status with the American Chiropractic Board of Radiology, and has published articles in *Roentgenology Briefs and Chiropractic Sports Medicine*. He is also a Vietnam veteran who earned 13 U.S. Air Force medals as a lieutenant colonel in the Missouri Air National Guard.

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#### FDA Adds HRT Warning Labels

The Food and Drug Administration is adding labels to all hormone replacement therapy products warning of the risks for heart disease, cancer, and stroke associated with HRT. This announcement is another ripple created by the release of a study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* last July. That long-term study was discontinued after the researchers found that women assigned to receive HRT developed an increased risk for heart disease, stroke and cancer.

Until last year, HRT was prescribed to millions of women to treat menopausal symptoms and help prevent heart disease and osteoporosis. According to FDA Commissioner Dr. Mark McClellan, all HRT products must now carry a warning on the packaging, noting the risks and offering alternative suggestions.

"A woman who is using or considering using estrogen or estrogen-progestin treatment should consult with her health care provider," emphasized Dr. McClellan. "In many cases, a woman will still want to rely on these products to deal with the effects of menopause. In other cases, alternative treatment will be appropriate."

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#### Costa Rican Islanders Reap Benefits of Chiropractic

Last November, James A. Kinnard, DC, utilized his chiropractic skills as part of a Christian medical mission in Costa Rica. While on the remote island of Chira for three days, Dr. Kinnard adjusted 469 Chira Indians, from newborn babies to an 81-year-old woman who needed to be carried in on a mattress. Local officials from the mainland also came seeking treatment, and were rewarded with Dr. Kinnard's expert care.

According to Dr. Kinnard, the medical staff members who accompanied him on the mission were amazed at the benefits of chiropractic, and how well it was received. Kinnard also felt the mission

was a positive experience because he and the medical doctors did not bring with them a competing mentality.

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#### Allergists, Immunologists to Meet in Denver

Leading physicians in allergy, immunology and asthma will convene in Denver from March 7-12 for the 60th Anniversary Meeting of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI). The meeting, entitled "Allergy, Asthma and Immunology: 60 Years of Progress," is expected to draw over 7,000 allergists and immunologists from around the world to share information on various aspects of their specialties.

The 60th Anniversary Meeting will showcase the past, present and future of allergy and immunology topics. Session topics will include therapeutic advances; health effects of indoor molds; food hypersensitivity; allergen vaccine development; and vaccines and biological threats. For more information, go to [www.aaaai.org](http://www.aaaai.org).

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