

Continuing to Grow as a Maturing Profession

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If you watch the circulation figures for Dynamic Chiropractic from year to year, you can't help but see a pattern. As the only chiropractic publication to reach almost 60,000 licensed DCs in the United States, our circulation is essentially a barometer for the growth of the chiropractic profession.

Chiropractic's current level of growth in the U.S. is relatively stable. With approximately 3,000 new graduates every year, we can expect a steady growth of new DCs for many years to come. This trend can't help but concern some established doctors. Many are expressing concerns, the foremost being:

"How can our profession sustain this level of growth?"

This is a valid concern, for as we all know, when supply exceeds demand, the value decreases.

"So, what do we do to be more successful?"

The answer to that question ultimately equates to "something different." New challenges call for new strategies. And new strategies often require businesses and organizations to re-invent themselves to execute these new strategies more efficiently.

"What does that mean?" Several things:

- It means that a single-doctor office with one receptionist and one back office person may not necessarily be the organizational structure that will prove most successful for every chiropractic practice in today's challenging health care marketplace.
- It means that remaining isolated from local providers in other health care disciplines may not be an option, unless you've been practicing in the same location for over 15 years.
- It means that you may have to extend yourself (and your staff) to be more proactive in educating patients. This will help insure that all patients understand the benefits of chiropractic, and are armed with accurate information and a desire to tell their families and friends about you.
- It most especially means that if what you are doing to market and promote your practice right now is not providing you with the results that you want, then you must be willing to change the "way I've always done it" attitude in an effort to make your practice more successful and help more hurting people.

Change is inevitable. How we respond to it can be an opportunity or a hindrance.

The public continues to move in our direction. More and more people are recognizing the place of "alternative care" in the maintenance of their health. As the "baby boomers" begin to reach senior status, they are more focused on their health than ever before. They are willing to spend their own money to maintain their active lifestyles.

There probably isn't one magic answer for every practice. How you practice; where you're located; your current patient base; your practice philosophy; and other factors come into play to shape the strategies of each individual practice.

The key is to continue to look for opportunities for practice growth. If "this" isn't working, try "that." A significant portion of your practice income should be used to make your practice more successful.

Remember, it's not only what you do to market your practice, but also how you do it. To be successful, you must be consistent. And if your staff doesn't support it, it's only a half-hearted effort.

In the end, passion and hard work will carry the day. These will translate into a special satisfaction that comes with maintaining the health of patients.

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