

Chiropractic Goes to the Commonwealth Games

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The 16th Commonwealth Games were held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in September, the first time the event has been held in an Asian country. There were 70 nations represented, with over 7,000 athletes and officials in attendance.

Four countries brought chiropractors as part of their official health care teams to the Commonwealth Games. Dr. Clive Hill again represented New Zealand; Dr. Ken Mickleson represented Canada; Dr. Don Oyao represented the Seychelles; and Drs. George Dragasevich and myself represented Australia.

For the 1998 Games, there were no chiropractors in the polyclinic. The polyclinic is where doctors can treat any athlete who seeks their care. At the Games in Canada four years ago, there were five chiropractors who worked in the polyclinic. This year, however, our requests to have chiropractors assigned to the polyclinic were refused, because chiropractic does not have official recognition in Malaysia.

The climate in Malaysia caused numerous problems for the athletes. The temperature and humidity was consistently high, which made any exercise difficult. The major health risks were dehydration and hyperthermia, and the athletes had to be monitored very closely.

All of the chiropractors who were in attendance at the Commonwealth Games reported being exceptionally busy and the demand for chiropractic care from the athletes, coaches and officials was extremely high.

The venue's sporting facilities in Malaysia were among the best in the world. The village where the athletes stayed was part of a high-rise apartment complex which will eventually be sold for apartment living after the Games.

The Commonwealth Games again proved to be a major success for sports chiropractic. Thanks go to the Federation Internationale de Chiropratique Sportive (FICS) for all the work they have done over the past decade to help chiropractors become more involved at major international sporting events.

The next Commonwealth Games will be held in Manchester, England in 2002. It is hoped that we will have chiropractors involved in the polyclinic at those Games.

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