

"Chiropractic Is Booming in Asia"

A REPORT FROM THE WORLD CHIROPRACTIC CONGRESS

Editorial Staff

TOKYO -- One of pervading messages of the 1997 World Chiropractic Congress at the spectacular Tokyo International Forum and Imperial Hotel in Japan, June 2-8, was the potential of chiropractic in Asia. Dr. John Sweaney of Australia, president of the World Federation of Chiropractic, put it more dramatically: "Chiropractic is booming in Asia."

With over 1,800 chiropractors in attendance, the Congress was not your ordinary chiropractic get together. The Congress was co-sponsored by the World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC), the Chiropractic Council of Japan (CCJ), and the Federation International de Chiropratique Sportive (FICS). It included a Cervical Spine Symposium co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), a FICS sports chiropractic seminar, a slate of other technique seminars from leading DCs, and 80 original chiropractic research presentations from around the world.

Speaking at the Congress banquet, Japanese Minister of Health Mr. Koizumi acknowledged that chiropractors now have an important role in the Japanese health care system, and that he would work with the profession for legislative recognition. There are 9,000 chiropractors in Japan. They can practice legally, but have no licensure or common education or protection of title.

"The WFC now has the support of all major arms of the chiropractic profession, including all national associations and the chiropractic educational and research communities," observed Dr. Scott Haldeman, who chairs the WFC Research Council. Dr. Haldeman pointed to the WFC's official recognition and member status with the World Health Organization, one of the co-sponsors of the Tokyo meeting. "After nine short years the WFC has truly arrived and is a major force for the international growth and acceptance of chiropractic."

Chiropractic Congress Highlights

WFC Assembly

The two day WFC General Assembly was attended by delegates representing over 50 member countries reporting on chiropractic developments around the world. Below are some examples of the reports, with an emphasis on the growth of chiropractic education:

International Charter on Education -- A key policy development at the assembly was the ratification of an international charter governing the introduction of chiropractic education in developing countries. Professions such as acupuncture and osteopathy have no international educational standard, unity and identity. The WFC charter provides the basis for a continuing international unity in chiropractic, but acknowledges that there may be "staged" development of academic programs, as is being done at RMIT-Japan.

RMIT University, Japan Unit (Tokyo) -- This chiropractic college has begun as a three-year program, with the intention of meeting the full standards of the Council on Chiropractic Education in the near future. The program is endorsed subject to various safeguards, one being that the short-term courses in technique or anatomy by chiropractors from North America, which have been common in Asian and other countries, are contrary to the charter and will now become a thing of the past.

Brazil -- With the assistance of Palmer University and the Brazilian Chiropractors' Association (the majority of whose members are Palmer alumni), Feevale University in Hamburgo, Rio Grande do Sol is quickly advancing with plans for the country's first chiropractic school. The school is expected to attract students from nearby Argentina, Chile and Paraguay.

Hong Kong -- Hong Kong, which of course reverted to Chinese dominion on July 1, has 45 chiropractors licensed under the Chiropractors' Act, and is now looking to develop a school of chiropractic. One wonders how the Chinese government will look on chiropractic: if favorably, it would be an incalculable boon to chiropractic in the East.

Italy -- A proposed licensing law has the support of many members of parliament from all major parties; the Italian Chiropractic Association is confident of major developments during the next year.

Korea -- A new chiropractic school will commence at Hanseo University next year, a partnership between Hanseo University, RMIT University in Australia, and the Korean Chiropractors' Association.
Netherlands -- Dutch chiropractors are fighting the loss of their right to perform and interpret diagnostic radiology, but otherwise chiropractic is flourishing. The number of DCs has doubled in the past five years to 140; practices are overflowing, and numbers could double again without meeting the demand.

Taiwan --- Taiwan Chiropractic Association member Dr. Edwin Chen was on the Taiwan government's delegation to the WHO annual assembly in Geneva in May. Taiwan's chiropractors are in active negotiation for the first undergraduate educational program in their country.

Turkey -- Dr. Fatma Ergin, a Cleveland Chiropractic College-Los Angeles alumna, reported on the first two chiropractic practices established in Istanbul, Turkey. Her fellow pioneer is Dr. Aysegul Ozturk, a Parker College graduate.

United Kingdom -- There is a continuing rapid expansion of chiropractic. Three universities, one in Wales, and two in England, are planning to open chiropractic programs over the next year.

WFC BANQUET

Speakers and guests of honor at the WFC banquet included Mr. Koizumi, Japan's minister of health, and Dr. Mikhail Mikheev, chief medical officer, Office of Occupational Health, WHO.

Dr. Scott Haldeman, chairman of the WFC Research Council, presented the WFC's "Honour Award" to Akio Sato, MD, PhD, for his distinguished research into somatovisceral reflexes and their relationship to health. He is in collaboration with chiropractic researchers Dr. Rand Swenson and Dr. Brian Budgell.

Cervical Spine Symposium

Opening a three day symposium on Friday, June 6, Dr. Mikheev from the WHO welcomed prominent

chiropractic and medical researchers from around the world. He acknowledged that the WHO now recognizes chiropractic services as an important component in the successful management of two of the primary causes of disability and cost in occupational health: back pain, and neck pain/headache.

The 1,800 registrants then heard, with simultaneous translation in Japanese/English, from leading cervical spine researchers: Yoshiharu Aizawa, MD (Japan); Phillip Bolton, DC, PhD (Australia); J. David Cassidy, DC, PhD (Canada); Jiri Dvorak, MD (Switzerland); Scott Haldeman, DC, MD, PhD (U.S.); Niels Nilsson, DC, MD (Denmark); Professor Ake Nygren, MD, DDS, PhD (Sweden); Lindsay Rowe, DC, MD, DACBR (Australia); Akio Sato, MD, PhD (Japan); Yoshihiro Suzuki, DC (Japan), and John Triano, MA, DC (U.S.).

Popular technique workshops came from prominent clinicians and teachers: Dr. Tom Bergmann (cervical biomechanics and adjustment); Dr. Richard Burns (Gonstead); Dr. Gary Jacob (McKenzie methods); Dr. John Triano (motion assisted adjusting); and Dr. Joseph Unger Jr. (SOT).

Research Awards

The strongest original research, in terms of numbers and quality, came from England and from South Africa, where there are now two government-funded schools of chiropractic. The major research awards were:

First Prize (\$5,000) -- (AECC, England): Responsiveness of Pain Scales: A Comparison of Three Pain Intensity Measures In Chiropractic Patients. Jennifer E. Bolton, PhD, and Rachel C. Wilkinson, BSc Chiro.

Second Prize (\$3,000) -- (Palmer, U.S.): Research Productivity of Chiropractic College Faculty. Dennis Marchiori, DC, MS, DACBR; William Meeker, DC, MPH; Cheryl Hawk, DC, PhD.

Third Prize (\$1,000) -- (Wiltshire Health Authority and AECC, England): A Pilot Study of the Purchase of Manipulation Services for Acute Low Back Pain; Neil Scheurmier and Alan Breen, DC, PhD.

Clinical Practice Award (\$1,000) -- (MTech Chiro, Technikon Natal, South Africa): Chiropractic Management of Primary Dysmenorrhoea: Bridget Bromfield.

Asian Region Federation

One of the many important side meetings of the Congress was a meeting to establish a chiropractic federation to represent all Asian countries. Europe, for instance, has the European Chiropractors Union (ECU) to look after its interests.

"This meeting showed us all that chiropractic is no longer a North American profession," said Mr. David Chapman-Smith, secretary-general of the WFC. "Dr. Mitsumasa Endo and his CCJ Organizing Committee delivered the most impressive and sophisticated chiropractic meeting we have ever attended, and we are all going to be amazed and greatly assisted by the huge development and growth of chiropractic in Asia in the next 10 years."

For more information on the World Federation of Chiropractic, including information on why you might want to become an associate member, please contact:

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