

Working Together

LET'S ALL PULL ON THE SAME END OF THE ROPE ... FOR A CHANGE

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It should be obvious to all that the interests of the members of the chiropractic profession will continue to be diverse. Varying practice styles, philosophies, and ambitions underscore the multifaceted beauty that is chiropractic.

So what does this mean? Are we a profession that will forever be torn by an inherent desire to be different?

Consider the incredible variety of interests within chiropractic. Some doctors are actively involved in their state association and local politics; some have ambitions that take them to a national level; many DCs prefer the fellowship of their college alumni association or of a diplomate council.

We are all unique, with varying needs and interests. But rather than pull us apart, these differences should be our source of strength. A profession of clones can only offer its members unanimity of opinion, but has little to offer the outside world beyond its narrow agenda. There may be expansion in numbers, but development is static.

So how do we solve a dilemma that has plagued chiropractic for most of its 101 years?

How do we practically deal with a profession where multiple organizations claim to represent a limited number of members?

You probably don't think about it much, but you are represented (to some degree or another) by:

1. at least one state association;
2. your state licensing board;
3. your chiropractic college alumni association;
4. at least one national association (there are a number of times when the two chiropractic associations in the U.S. independently act to represent the entire chiropractic profession);

And these organizations are represented by:

1. The Congress of Chiropractic State Associations;
2. The Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards;

3. The Association of Chiropractic Colleges;
4. The Council on Chiropractic Education;
5. The World Federation of Chiropractic.

The above lists don't begin to consider the numerous techniques councils, special interest associations (e.g., International Chiropractic Pediatric Association), additional organizational consortiums (e.g., the Consortium for Chiropractic Research, now called the American Spinal Research Foundation, the Council on Chiropractic Guidelines and Practice Parameters), and organizations such as the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research, and the Foundation for the Advancement of Chiropractic Tenets and Science. To the outside individual or organization trying to understand chiropractic, this profession must seem like a pile of splinters.

Is that what we are?

Are we segregated to the point of being dysfunctional? Generally speaking, we do suffer from segregation that in many ways hinders our advancement. But that can be changed.

This profession can overcome the liabilities of intense individuality by team building. The team approach is fairly straightforward. It doesn't force any organization (or individual) to lose its identity; it involves all recognized organizations that have an interest and an ability to impact a particular issue confronting chiropractic.

What could happen if this profession chose to fight our political battles with the following team?

- ACA and ICA working on a common agenda;
- state associations and chiropractic colleges supporting that agenda on the local level;
- research organizations generating much needed data to support the lobbying effort;
- other organizations continuously appraised of the progress of the chiropractic team, and looking for opportunities where they can be supportive.

Could this REALLY happen?

Could the chiropractic profession, particularly in the U.S., actually work together?

WHY NOT?

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