



NEWS / PROFESSION

Shaping Public Perception of Chiropractic

“WELLCARE REVOLUTION” EXPANDS TO THE BIG APPLE

Editorial Staff

The Ohio State Chiropractic Association's (OSCA) highly successful "WellCare Revolution" campaign, which began in March 2007 on statewide television¹ and featured Ohio State University All-American and four-time National Football League Pro Bowl linebacker Chris Spielman and Olympic gold medalist Butch Reynolds, has made its way to the Big Apple. The OSCA recently announced a two-year licensing agreement with the New York Chiropractic Council, which will be launching its own "WellCare Revolution," led by NFL Hall of Famer Harry Carson, former New York Giant and nine-time NFL Pro Bowl linebacker.

The Carson-endorsed WellCare campaign, set to debut in Spring 2008, will incorporate an original TV spot, a portfolio of templateable, downloadable celebrity-endorsed print ads, as well as a customized WellCare Web site that will inform, educate and direct end consumers to council member locations, searchable by name, zip code and/or school. The Carson TV spots are designed to elevate the brand and inspire trust. The spots exemplify an "everyman feel," highlighting blue-collar workers, a police officer, a proud farmer - all concluding with a simple proclamation by Carson: "I do, too, and always have. I believe in chiropractic."



**Former New York Giant
linebacker Harry Carson, an
NFL Hall of Famer, will serve
as spokesperson for the N.Y.
Wellcare Revolution campaign.**

Carson has been a supporter of chiropractic since his playing days with the Giants. In fact, when a back injury continued to bother Carson during the 1983 season, the Giants team physician immediately recommended him to a chiropractor and Carson has been incorporating chiropractic into his life. "I have lived it. It's no secret chiropractic helped me immensely during my 13 consecutive seasons with the Giants, and it continues to play an integral part in my daily life," said Carson. "I am proud to be involved with chiropractic, and I'm looking forward to performing my duties as the Council's WellCare ambassador."

The council initially became interested after a presentation in 2006 by OSCA Executive Director Woody Woodward at the Congress of Chiropractic State Associations (COCSA) convention in Baltimore, where Barbara Contessa, executive director of the council, was in attendance. Soon after, Dr. Craig Fishel, chairman of the council's public relations committee, contacted the OSCA and its marketing agency, Circone + Associates, about bringing WellCare to New York. "Following their presentation," said Dr. Stephen Simonetti, past president of COCSA and current president emeritus of the council, "we knew they had created exactly what we were seeking. From TV to the Web, the campaign was smart, strategic and sophisticated in its planning and perspective approach. Add a little New York celebrity appeal and sponsorship support, and we knew we had something special."

Fishel worked diligently with Circone + Associates to find the perfect statewide ambassador for their message. "It's about finding someone that already uses chiropractic, accepts its foundational philosophies and can naturally convey its inherent benefits," said Shawne Beck, brand partnership director at Circone.

"Harry is a living example of what WellCare can provide. He is in constant communication with his body and conscious of ways to improve his overall health," added Fishel.



Like Ohio, the New York Chiropractic Council's WellCare campaign is part of a comprehensive repositioning effort designed to stimulate and evoke public trust in the chiropractic message. "It's working tremendously in Ohio," said Woodward. "The public is responding to our celebrities' everyday commitment to chiropractic and it appears that the consumers' trust in our TV personalities is truly transferring into real trust for our profession." "We feel," added Fishel, "[that] with Carson's commitment this same trust can be infused into our organization, our profession, and the public's perception of the chiropractic proposition."

One finding of the OSCA's comprehensive chiropractic survey was that the majority of the general public (more than 60 percent) strongly opposed dependence and over dependence upon costly prescription drugs, now totaling nearly \$250 billion annually, while nearly 90 percent of consumers were open to natural health solutions. This is precisely the public perception opportunity that WellCare is betting on in Ohio and now New York. WellCare is based on the fact that the employment of monitored wellness along life's journey decreases overall health risks and long-term, individual health care expenses.

WellCare, defined as "everyday, vested care," promulgates restoration through "authentic care episodes" positioned as the combined investment of consistent, complimentary therapies working to stabilize and sustain the body, mind and spirit. It is preventative, self-directed health care incorporating alternative wellness and natural healing therapies.

"We're looking to change perceptions quickly," said Brad Circone, president of Circone + Associates, which co-authored the WellCare platform. "Celebrities of Carson's stature imbue all the feelings missing, or at least perceived as inconsistent in the chiropractic dynamic, especially between DCs and patients. Consequently, WellCare was designed to naturally reinforce patients' feelings of genuine care as 'original', 'authentic' and 'sincere.' We can reverse this distrust by letting others tell our story. We are asking DCs to stop selling and start inviting the consumer into their WellCare world." said Circone. "Let them discover the indisputable value of the chiropractic profession - so that the believers tell the rest of the nonbelievers through our practicing persona of WellCare - empathy, engagement, empowerment."

Fishel and the council believe Carson is the perfect ambassador for just such a message. "If Harry is half as fierce in his belief of chiropractic, and I believe he is, as he was ferocious against the run, we feel his involvement will be as profound to our profession as it was to the NFL," said Fishel.

In an effort to instill even greater trust, and to turn consumers on to the virtues of chiropractic, New York, like Ohio, will create a foundation - WellCare Foundation of New York, in support of The Harry Carson Scholarship Fund, which assists children with aplastic anemia. Harry's son Donald has been diagnosed with the disease and currently is in his second year of graduate school in the Medical Masters Program at Hampton University in Virginia. The council will help raise awareness and money for the Carson Scholarship Fund through the use of its WellCare Foundation. Charitable contributions will be welcomed via the council's WellCare Revolution Web site.

Circone + Associates will work closely with the council to attract and capture similar corporate partners to help fund the Carson WellCare spots as part of a planned New York media launch in support of its upcoming TV campaign.

Chiropractic associations interested in learning more about how they can bring WellCare to their

states are encouraged to visit www.wellcarerevolution.com/wc.

Reference

1. "Ohio State Chiropractic Association Launches 'WellCare Revolution.' TV Spots Are First Step of Nationwide Repositioning Campaign." *Dynamic Chiropractic*, April 9, 2007.
www.chiroweb.com/archives/25/08/13.html.

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