

We Get Letters and E-Mail

Fighting for Your Practice Rights

Dear Editor:

The July 15, 2008 issue of *Dynamic Chiropractic* contained a letter to the editor from Dr. George Ruddell of Lewiston, Idaho. In his letter, Dr. Ruddell asserts that the solution to national (chiropractic) unity is for all to join the ACA, claiming, "The ICA just does not do much anymore."

The leadership of the International Chiropractors Association (ICA) believes it is the duty of a national political organization to protect the rights of chiropractors to be able to practice chiropractic as historically practiced without interference. The leadership of the ICA does not believe that chiropractic practice should be defined or limited by the government or insurance companies, or by their representatives.

The ICA leadership believes that presently, there are three major threats to traditional chiropractic:

- The pigeon-holing of chiropractic into managing only musculoskeletal pain syndromes, with a limitation on patient visits to treat such syndromes of between three and 12 visits. This perspective jeopardizes the clinical practice of thousands of chiropractors who are treating hundreds of thousands of patients with nonmusculoskeletal syndromes or for wellness. It also compromises the quality of management in those patients with severe injury or chronic problems that require more prolonged treatment
- The elimination of spinal radiographs for the assessment of biomechanical problems under the contention that such radiographs are unethical. Such a perspective jeopardizes the clinical practice of thousands of chiropractors who rely on precisely taken and measured spinal radiographs to adjust hundreds of thousands of patients under their care.
- The establishment of practice guidelines that would reduce the clinical syndromes that chiropractors could manage and consequently reduce or eliminate insurance reimbursements for those syndromes, using the argument that "there is no evidence." The ICA leadership believes that such guidelines would harm the large majority of practicing chiropractors and the millions of patients they serve.

In contrast to the misinformed statements of Dr. Ruddell, the ICA has spent (and is continuing to invest) countless financial and human resources to combat these threats to traditional chiropractic and numerous other lesser threats. As a political organization, the ICA fights for our rights to practice traditional chiropractic. In the past year, the ICA has produced two historic documents to protect our profession, the *Best Practices & Practice Guidelines* and the PCCRP X-ray guidelines. Both documents are meticulously referenced and have already been officially endorsed by several state associations. These documents can be viewed and commented upon by visiting www.chiropractic.org and selecting the "About ICA" tab. The ICA's *Best Practices & Practice Guidelines* are the most comprehensive ever written, containing over 1,350 clinical chiropractic publications, randomized clinical trials, nonrandomized clinical trials, cohorts, case series and case reports.

Additionally, the ICA has located and scanned into a database all printed studies pertaining to the chiropractic management of both musculoskeletal and nonmusculoskeletal syndromes. This database will soon be a member benefit for all ICA members. The magnitude of all three projects is gargantuan, and spearheaded by chiropractor and mathematician Don Harrison. To claim that the ICA "just does not do much anymore" shows ignorance and is insulting to all ICA members, officers and staff who work tirelessly for the entire chiropractic profession.

As a consequence of the ICA's efforts to protect the practice rights of all chiropractors, the dues-paying membership of the ICA increased from 1,930 in 2007 to 2,603 in 2008, a gain of 673 members in a single year. In the same time frame, the dues-paying membership in the ACA went from 6,566 to 6,152, a reduction of 414 members. The World Federation of Chiropractic supplied these statistics in June 2008.

The saddest statistic is that the ACA and ICA combined have only 8,755 dues-paying members. Assuming 60,000 practicing chiropractors, together the ACA and ICA represent less than 15 percent of chiropractors. This number is generous when acknowledging that a number of chiropractors are members of both organizations. True chiropractic unity will require that the 85 percent of chiropractors who belong to neither national organization become involved.

The ICA will continue to fight for the practice rights of all chiropractors, to our last member and our last dollar. The leadership of the ICA invites all who wish to contribute to our fight to join the productive, hard-working members and staff of the ICA.

John Maltby, DC
ICA President

Problems With St. Petersburg College

Dear Editor:

I am a DC in St. Pete who does school exams for all schools except SPC. The reason is that SPC only accepts MDs and DOs to do exams. How can National, a great college of chiropractic, deal with a college that makes DCs drink from a separate water fountain, ride in the back of the bus and use different bathrooms? SPC, or whoever is responsible, needs to give the chiropractors of St. Petersburg, Florida and the nation an apology.

By the way, I also have treated an instructor of SPC's driving school for 18-wheelers and have tried to get in line to do DOT exams, but I haven't gotten to first base, even though I'm willing to give a better price.

Wayne S. Swanson, DC
St. Petersburg, Fla.

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