

The Evolution of Chiropractic Education and Information

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Depending on just how long it's been since you graduated, you may be unfamiliar with the current learning environment in our chiropractic colleges. The power of the Internet, combined with the availability of laptop computers, has changed the very nature of learning in the chiropractic college classroom. Typically, about a third of the students have their laptops open and are taking notes, surfing the net or playing games, depending on the lecture.

Taking advantage of this trend is a whole host of online programs designed to enhance the learning experience of today's students. Even as we speak, these programs are currently being instituted in many of our chiropractic colleges around the globe.

Having just returned from a conference dealing with chiropractic education using 21st-century technology, I was able to hear firsthand about the many educational opportunities made available by this new technology. The two-day conference was sponsored by the WFC and the ACC. There were representatives from chiropractic colleges and associations from around the world.

The program for the first day began with a discussion of the "blended learning" environment and how course-management software is impacting the classroom experience as well as learning outside the classroom. While the new software is still evolving, it became clear the Internet will play an ever-increasing role in chiropractic education.

My contribution came in the afternoon. I presented a short history of lessons learned from earlier Web efforts and ultimately provided an overview of our experience with Webinars and other Webcasts. Our efforts to provide quality information utilizing these tools will be enhanced in 2009.

As one of the many speakers, it was exciting to see how the profession was evolving around the world. The second day of the conference included discussions on medical records, digital X-rays and other technologies that are making their way into the chiropractic practice. There is little doubt that the demands of data management are driving a digital revolution in all aspects of health care. The advantages are clear, even if the choices are not.

It is also evident that not all doctors of chiropractic are necessarily early adopters of new technology. This is not necessarily a bad position to take for your practice, as waiting allows you to sort out which technology will become dominant and which is a passing fad. But even the most conservative clinician must admit that changes are coming to chiropractic practice. It is not a matter of *if*, but *when*. The best action you can take is to stay informed and take advantage of opportunities to learn about and "test drive" new programs.

Currently, you have the opportunity to utilize online technology to enhance your practice at absolutely

no charge whatsoever. There are several chiropractic colleges and other organizations offering free Webinars that you can attend right from your own office. To view the schedule of upcoming *Dynamic Chiropractic* Webinars, please visit www.dynamicchiropractic.com/webcasts/archives/index.php. If you'd like to receive an advanced e-mail invitation to these Webinars, sign up at www.chiroweb.com/webinar_notify/subscribe.php.

As new graduates enter the profession each year, the delivery of information and education will become increasingly more electronic, and for several reasons. Not only is it more efficient, but it's also what our new doctors of chiropractic expect.

If this all seems somewhat or perhaps even completely foreign to you, don't despair. It's actually pretty easy once you've done it a few times. Begin with some Webinars; I think you'll be impressed at the variety of advantages the Internet can provide.

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