

## Fourth Summit Meeting Yields Consensus

### POSITION STATEMENT ON MEDICARE REFORM APPROVED.

Editorial Staff

At the fourth Chiropractic Summit, held in mid-January 2009 during the annual [Las Vegas Parker Seminar](#), representatives of 39 chiropractic organizations, including colleges, state and national associations, publishers, vendors and others, produced and ratified "one message" on Medicare reform that states, in part: "Medicare beneficiaries should have the right to choose and be reimbursed for health care services from doctors of chiropractic without barriers and limitations that unfairly restrict their freedom of choice."

The position statement establishes a single voice representing the chiropractic profession's stance relative to Medicare reform, which appears to be a priority in the Obama administration's agenda to reshape the delivery of U.S. health care. The message also suggests a simple solution to the current Medicare crisis: "[L]egislation should provide reimbursement to beneficiaries for the full range of currently covered health care services when provided by doctors of chiropractic consistent with state law."

The position statement also states the following: "Chiropractic care is important in improving function, mobility and quality of life for beneficiaries through the use of conservative methods which reduce the reliance on drugs and surgery. Its safety, effectiveness and cost savings are well-supported by scientific evidence. Improved access to healthcare services will assist the Medicare system in responding to emerging challenges due to an aging population, including the shortage of health care providers and the rising burden of neuromusculoskeletal conditions."

Washington, D.C. hosted the first Chiropractic Summit, which brought together 13 chiropractic organizations in September 2007. The second summit meeting took place at Parker Las Vegas in February 2008 and featured representatives of 24 chiropractic organizations. [The third summit meeting, held last August in Orlando](#) during the Florida Chiropractic Association's national convention, featured more than 40 national and international chiropractic leaders representing 32 associations, colleges, companies and other entities.

Medicare reform has been a hot topic within the chiropractic profession in the past year. For example, in 2008, the [ACA](#) emphasized to state chiropractic licensing boards that the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) is scheduled to report to Congress sometime in 2009 on the results of the [Medicare Chiropractic Demonstration Project](#), and that CMS findings may influence chiropractors' ability to provide and be reimbursed for services. [The ACA is particularly concerned about high claim error rates and their effect on chiropractic inclusion in the Medicare system](#), said ACA President Glenn Manceaux, DC, in May of last year:

"It is abundantly clear that unless we can convincingly demonstrate that our profession has put into place various educational and training programs, along with policies and requirements that will collectively lead to a significant reduction in Medicare claims errors, then the U.S. Congress will likely

reject any proposals allowing DCs to provide additional services within Medicare."

Also in 2008, the ICA held its first National Conference on the Future of Chiropractic in Medicare. Various presenters covered Medicare-specific topics during the day-long session, including documentation challenges and Medicare savings accounts. Around the same time, the ICA also released a draft white paper titled "The Future of Chiropractic in Medicare," which states, in part: Chiropractic's position in this massive program, while statistically small, is vitally important to the millions of Medicare beneficiaries who seek chiropractic care as their personal choice. ... In the coming period of national debate on Medicare, the chiropractic profession must position itself as an uncompromising champion of patient rights and competition in the Medicare system." That white paper served as foundation for a subsequent discussion paper titled "[Chiropractic and Medicare in the 2008 Elections and Beyond](#)."

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