

How to Impact Public Health Beyond the Walls of Your Office

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At a recent meeting of my county board of health, of which I am a member, we discussed a local water system with unacceptable arsenic levels. The contaminated water system was months away from being hooked into the larger water system, which would completely remediate the arsenic problem. The local system wanted permission to not treat the arsenic, as the contamination problem would shortly be moot. We granted the waiver, with the recommendation that the local water system supply a gallon of bottled drinking water per day to each resident who requested it until the problem was corrected (by hooking into the larger water system).

How many chiropractors get to work on improving the health of the community by remediating an arsenic problem? I was excited to contribute. At other meetings, we have discussed community pharmaceutical collection and disposal, local outbreaks, prevention of tobacco sales to minors, control of *E. coli* and *Cryptosporidium* in water systems, care of the elderly and the disabled in large-scale emergencies, and much more.

How much more could chiropractors everywhere impact the health of their communities with involvement in public health outside their offices? My participation with the [American Public Health Association](#) (APHA) helped open the door for my participation in this setting, and your participation can help open the door for you.

We've heard a great deal about "chiropractic and public health" and the APHA over the past few years, with increasing attention and focus. Recent articles in various chiropractic media have highlighted the inroads made by the chiropractic profession into mainstream public health practice. Indeed, many voices friendly to chiropractic have been doing much to help advance chiropractic within public health circles.

Perhaps the watershed moment of "chiropractic and public health" was the attendance of the renowned executive director of the APHA, Dr. Georges Benjamin, at this year's [World Federation of Chiropractic \(WFC\) Congress](#) in Montreal. Dr. Benjamin, who spoke at the final session, shatters notions that chiropractors are unable to participate fully in mainstream public health. His attendance brings recognition to the fact that the APHA appreciates the participation of chiropractors and is willing to stand publicly with chiropractors in their public health efforts. Barriers to chiropractic participation in public health are falling.

The APHA has long been a welcoming and important organization for chiropractors who wish to be part of a broader movement - the movement of chiropractors who seek an integrated role within public health and health care. If you long for chiropractors to participate more fully in these areas, join us at the APHA and begin participating!

If you can imagine a future with chiropractors working as equals with other providers, join us and begin working toward that future. If you would like to interact with like-minded chiropractors who want to contribute to the health of their communities and the world outside the walls of their offices, now is the time.

We look forward to working with you. To join the APHA, complete the membership application form on this page or log on to www.apha.org, click on "Membership," and then "Join/Renew." As you fill out the form, don't forget to select "Chiropractic Health Care" as your primary section affiliation. We look forward to working with you at the APHA - it is worth your investment.

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