

The Key to Chiropractic's Future Is More Education, But Not Your Own

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As a PI attorney who does a good amount of teaching and outreach with the chiropractic community, I enjoy a front-row seat to the ever-evolving role chiropractic is playing in our society. From the days of jailing chiropractors for practicing medicine without a license, chiropractic can be said to have come a long way. We stand today, however, on the precipice of the true societal embrace of chiropractic, and it has never been more important to recommit ourselves to that cause.

According to [several surveys](#) by Gallup and Palmer College, 63 percent of people believe chiropractors have their patients' best interest in mind and 52 percent find chiropractors to be trustworthy. Nearly 30 percent (29%) say they would see a chiropractor first, rather than a medical doctor, for neck and back pain.

These numbers are good, but they also illuminate a sad reality: 37 percent of people don't believe chiropractors necessarily have their patients' best interests at heart and 48 percent may not find chiropractors to be trustworthy. This leaves a lot of room for improvement (and lest you think I'm throwing stones, more than a third of Americans think lawyers contribute nothing to society).

The solution is as obvious as it is indefinite. We must double down on our education efforts.

Not surprisingly, this is the same answer to another question I get often: "How do I best attract new clients?" Your current patients represent an untapped potential. Every single patient of yours can and should be singing your praises and the praises of chiropractic to their friends and family every chance they get – but they need your help.

Most people, even longtime chiropractic patients, have no idea of the true scope of chiropractic. Many don't know, for example, that you have been trained to deal with trauma and that you can take on personal-injury cases. Many PI patients, when asked in deposition, have no idea what their chiropractor did to help them.

Teaching your existing patients this information (and not just once) is critical to keeping you top of mind when a friend or family member of your patient gets into an accident; and also to expand the societal understanding of what you do and what you are capable of doing.

The opioid epidemic, for example, often makes the headlines, but no one seems to be talking about the contribution chiropractors could make to solving that problem when the majority of those who become addicted start out with neck or back pain.

[One recent study](#) found that patients with spinal pain who saw a chiropractor had half the risk of filling an opioid prescription! That is an incredible statistic, and when combined with the fact that [78 percent of people](#) prefer to try other ways to address pain before they take prescription pain

medication, it seems the only thing stopping chiropractors from being the heroes of the opioid epidemic is society's lack of knowledge and understanding of the profession.

Other than doing your individual part to educate your patients about the important work you are doing with them and that you are capable of doing for others, organizations such as the [Foundation for Chiropractic Progress](#) are working to educate the public about chiropractic care through positive press. Just recently, they won multiple awards and generated millions of impressions for a 30-second TV commercial titled "[I Know Pain](#)" which first aired during the Summer Olympic Games.

The ad features Olympian-turned-chiropractor, Dr. Erica Witter-Davis, discussing how chiropractic saved her Olympic dreams and the overall benefits of chiropractic - touting that DCs can relieve pain and enhance performance. Press like this on a world stage is exactly the type of education Americans need on the subject. I encourage chiropractors to contribute to pro-chiropractic causes such as this one that provide the much-needed boost to the chiropractic image.

The importance of this work cannot be understated. We need more TV and radio ads, more instances of professional athletes discussing the benefits of chiropractic, more characters on our favorite TV shows depicting chiropractors as the benefit to society we all know you are. Only then will we see chiropractic truly enter the mainstream and realize its true potential. There has never been a better time for all that to happen.

I witness the power of chiropractic firsthand every day. I see the tireless work doctors are doing with my PI clients and I hear the success stories. These stories translate into thousands of people who aren't taking drugs, getting injections or undergoing painful surgeries; but more importantly, these stories also translate into positive data points. The battle for public acceptance is won through attrition. You are on the front lines, and it has never been more important to keep fighting.

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