



# The Battle for the Public Mind

By C.J. Mertz, DC  
ICA President

Where will the future of chiropractic be most successfully anchored? This is not an academic question. The rapidly changing health care marketplace and aggressive new strategies on the part of competing health care providers and interests are making all of our old assumptions very shaky ground on which to stand, let alone grow. Are we on target now? What do we need to do to position ourselves in the marketplace to take advantage of the major shifts looming in the horizon?

In this fast-moving and confusing environment, the chiropractic professional organizations have all tended to focus their efforts on public policy matters, including efforts to expand chiropractic coverage in programs like Medicare, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Medicaid and a host of other vitally important publicly funded health care administration, funding and delivery programs. This work is vital and in this process, the International Chiropractors Association will continue its determined efforts for full chiropractic inclusion in all public health programs, at all levels of government. This has been ICA's historic commitment since the days of our Founder, Dr. B.J. Palmer,

who traveled the nation campaigning for licensing laws in the states, leaving a record of accomplishment in that arena of which we can all be proud.

There are signs and signals, however, in the realm of government health programs to which we at the ICA are alert, and which we are taking very seriously. These signals illuminate what many well-versed analysts and observers see as a massive, profound and unprecedented shift in public spending on health, as all elements in our nation shift towards caring for the massive age wave that continues its steady advance, towards the 60 million or more level at which this segment of our population will top.

Even a brief examination of the projected ratio of demand for publicly funded services versus the available resources to pay for them, shows that massive changes are going to be needed just to cover the barest minimum levels of service. No politician seems to have the vision or the courage to talk about these realities, forced, it seems, by the bidding war between parties to continue to pretend that America's bounty is endless and that we can afford to pay for all they have promised.

Someone, somewhere will, eventu-

ally, find the voice to articulate the inherent fallacy of this notion, or the nation will simply just be forced to face reality by the massive gap between demand and resources. In this collapse of current health care assumptions, it seems very clear that those citizens who have personal resources will have no choice but to assume the lion's share of the responsibility for paying for health care.

Where will chiropractic be when the consumer, not the government or some third-party payment agency is the primary decision-maker about health care purchases? How likely will the 100 million or more Americans who find themselves outside the government umbrella, largely because they have the personal resources to take care of their own routine healthcare expenses, be to make the chiropractic choice? That depends on how well we educate those same consumers today!

ICA's mission, and chiropractic's mission must be to position our profession in such a way as to be able to be of maximum service to the public, offer our unique services to consumers of all ages without restriction or limitation, and respond to the public's educated and informed call on our services in an ethical and responsible manner.

What is necessary for this national partnership between independent consumers and our profession to develop? There is only one clear answer; a major breakthrough on how the public sees and understands our profession. While battles in Congress, the courts or state legislatures continue to rage, absorbing most of the profession's attention and resources, the battle for public understanding, which is going on whether we are tuned in to its nuances or not, must

be fought and won.

The battle for the public mind is a battle for true public understanding of what chiropractic is and what doctors of chiropractic do. Do we have time and the commitment to enter this fight with the resources and determination to win? I think we have no choice if we want to see chiropractic continue to grow and thrive as a separate and distinct approach to health, built upon our historic focus on the subluxation and the adjustment.

Now the bad news. Not only has this fight been neglected by the chiropractic profession, in deference to other perceived priorities, our critics and competitors, recognizing the urgent and vital nature of this struggle are on the field in force, with well-planned and funded strategies, seeking to erode the level of awareness and confidence the public has in chiropractic as it emerges. Why do you think the media regularly disseminates anti-chiropractic stories based on what, in the end, turns out to be shabby, flimsy and questionable information? Because competitors are using the media to contain our public profile and consumer attitudes!

ICA does not want to just fight back. We want to FIGHT FORWARD! ICA has embarked on an unprecedented effort to lead this battle for the public mind on behalf of the profession and the tens of millions of citizens of all ages, in all nations, who so urgently need the care that only a doctor of chiropractic can provide. In this campaign:

- We are going to do the work necessary to understand consumer thinking and decision-making through the historic focus group project now underway.

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## J O I N I C A T O D A Y !

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
MONTH YEAR

Office Address\* \_\_\_\_\_ Suite \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Chiropractic College Attended \_\_\_\_\_ Grad. Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Chiropractic licenses held in: \_\_\_\_\_

In active practice?  Yes  No Former SICA member?  Yes  No Former Field member?  Yes  No

I hereby apply for membership in the International Chiropractors Association, agreeing to abide by the Constitution, By-Laws, Code of Ethics, all amendments and regulations adopted by the Board of Directors and Officers of the Association under the provisions of the Constitution, and amendments hereafter legally adopted. I also understand that failure to remit dues will result in loss of membership, and all rights and privileges thereof.

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my:  VISA  MasterCard  American Express  Enclosed is a check/money order

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

#### FIELD MEMBERSHIP

##### First year after graduation

- Former Student ICA member (\$50 transfer fee) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-Student ICA member (\$85 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

##### Second year after graduation

- Former Student ICA member (\$85 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-Student ICA member (\$75 qtr./ \$300 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

##### Third year after graduation

- Former Student ICA member (\$75 qtr./ \$300 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-Student ICA member (\$150 qtr./ \$600 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

##### Fourth year or more after graduation

- (\$150 qtr./ \$600 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### INTERNATIONAL — OUTSIDE U.S.

- \$150 yr. (U.S.) Payment may be made by MasterCard/Visa/American Express or International Money Order. Checks drawn on Canadian Banks must have "In US Funds" written after amount. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### FACULTY — D.C.s (full-time faculty only<sup>†</sup>)

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- Non-Voting\* (\$110 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Teaching at (school): \_\_\_\_\_

#### LAY\*\* (must be sponsored by two ICA members)

- Faculty non-D.C. (\$85 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Chiropractic Assistant (\$85 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Interested individual (\$85 yr.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Plus \$15 non-refundable application fee \$ 15.00

STUDENT\*\* (\$30 one-time fee) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT\*\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_**



Return application to:  
**INTERNATIONAL CHIROPRACTORS ASSOCIATION**  
 1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 1000 • Arlington, VA 22201  
 • 1-800-423-4690 or 1-703-528-5000 • Fax: 703-528-5023

\* Unless otherwise requested, correspondence will be sent to your office address.  
 \*\* Not eligible to vote in ICA elections  
 † Teaching 8 or more academic hours per week at an accredited chiropractic college.  
 †† ICA dues are not deductible as a charitable contribution for income tax purposes, but may be deductible as a business expense.