



CHIROPRACTIC ROUND-UP

INITIATIVES IN THE USA AND AROUND THE WORLD

By Ronald M. Hendrickson,
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As chiropractic moves center stage in health care systems around the world, it is imperative that the profession sees itself as a global community and establishes a global network of communication to help advance initiatives that can have an impact on how and where DCs practice. What happens in New Hampshire or Melbourne, can have real and sometimes unforeseen significance in another country across the world. This report is aimed at keeping you updated on what is going on in the US states, Canadian provinces and other countries so you are forewarned and prepared to deal with those issues if and when they present themselves at home. It is not possible to cover all pending chiropractic initiatives and activities world-wide in one issue, but here is a glimpse into important areas of chiropractic development in recent months.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Voters in California decided on new penalties for insurance fraud for chiropractors on March 5th when Proposition 44 appeared on that state's primary election ballot. Proposition 44 requires the California Board of Chiropractic Examiners to revoke for ten years the license of a chiropractor who is convicted for a second time, or is convicted of multiple counts in a single case, of various specified offenses, including insurance fraud. After the ten-year period, the chiropractor may apply to the board to reinstate his or her license.

Currently, the board has discretion over which punishment to assess for the offenses covered by this measure. This punishment may or may not result in license revocation. The measure further requires the board to investigate any licensed chiropractor who has been criminally charged with committing insurance fraud, if the district attorney does not object to the investigation. The measure also includes as "unprofessional conduct" the hiring of "runners" or other persons by chiropractors to procure patients, except "as this practice is allowed by law."

The Chiropractic Act is a law that was adopted by the voters and any changes to the act require voter approval. Under the Act, the Board of Chiropractic Examiners' licenses and regulates chiropractors who practice in California. The board may impose discipline including license revocation for various acts of misconduct. The act makes it a misdemeanor for a person to violate its provisions. Conviction of a violation is subject to a fine or imprisonment in county jail, or both a fine and imprisonment.

DELAWARE: The Delaware Chiroprac-

tic Society (DCS) is preparing efforts to pass an "any willing provider" bill. This legislation is being developed in an effort to stem the negative impact that the monopoly-like hold managed care plans continue to exercise over patient decision-making. The DCS's Legislative Chair Dr. Ronald Saggese brought this important initiative to ICA's attention, and the ICA Task Force on State Legislation did extensive research to provide data and background information to support this initiative.

This collection of reference and resource documents, including legislation, organizational position statements and research papers on "any willing provider" initiatives in the United States is now available to any state organization considering such a legislative initiative.

The ICA strongly supports the concept of "any willing provider" legislation because it levels the playing field in the health care market place and removes some of the unreasonable and anti-competitive barriers established by managed care organizations and insurance companies. The record shows that limiting participation in managed care provider lists is intended as a utilization control device, with chiropractic access and consumer demand being stifled in the process.

ICA also asks that any organization in possession of resources or information that might help the DCS pass their professional rights bill to contact the DCS lobbyist, Yvonne Steele, via e-mail at yqsf@aol.com, or the ICA headquarters at 1-800-423-4690. This is an effort that every chiropractor and chiropractic organization should support.

FLORIDA: A proposal to add the prescription and administration of injectable nutrients and supplements to the scope of chiropractic practice in the state of Florida was firmly rejected at a hearing in Orlando on Friday, December 7, 2001 when state officials informed the Florida Chiropractic Board that such a proposal was clearly outside the authority of the Board to approve.

After hearing arguments from proponents of the addition of this allopathic medical procedure to the state's chiropractic scope, discussion on the issue ended when the Board learned that only the Florida Legislature could mandate such a change. This blunt message was presented by a senior official from the Florida Board of Pharmacology, based on the reading of the law by the Office of the Florida Attorney General.

The ICA, in close cooperation with the Florida Chiropractic Society and allied educational institutions including Life University, Life Chiropractic College-West and Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic, were strongly opposed to the proposed amendment.

The proposal to expand chiropractic scope to include injectables was put forward by a group calling itself the Florida Chiropractic Physicians Association, and supported by a few fringe in-

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