

# THE CHIROPRACTIC CHOICE

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## MEDICARE, MANAGED CARE & CHIROPRACTIC

*continued from page 1*

for chiropractic the status it deserves in Medicare."

ICA recognizes that opportunities for any major expansion in chiropractic spending will be limited by shrinking federal revenues and any chiropractic initiative will be in savage competition with those of other provider groups. The budget situation will not preclude improvements in the way the chiropractic services program is administered, such as mandating direct access to chiropractic services in managed care programs with Medicare contracts, more clearly defining the chiropractic "adjustment", or provisions that preserve chiropractic care delivery to doctors of chiropractic only.

These efforts deserve the full support of a united chiropractic profession and the Chiropractic Coalition will be seeking to work with all organizations to secure the best possible deal for chiropractic in the new Congress. Only legislation will provide any major relief for the chiropractic beneficiary and the chiropractic provider in the Medicare program. Neither the courts nor administrative changes are likely to yield any lasting benefits for chiropractic in this hotly contested federal program.

The Bush initiative includes the following:

- All seniors should have the option of a subsidized prescription drug benefit as part of modernized Medicare;
- Modernized Medicare should provide better coverage for preventive care and serious illness;
- Beneficiaries should have the option of keeping the traditional plan with no changes;
- Medicare should provide better health insurance options, like those available to all federal employees;
- Medicare legislation should strengthen the program's long-term financial security;
- The management of the government Medicare plan should be strengthened so that it can provide better care for seniors;
- Medicare's regulations and administrative procedures should be updated and streamlined, while the instances of fraud and abuse should be reduced;
- Medicare should encourage high-quality health care for seniors.

In proposing his reform initiative, President Bush stated that he "looks forward to working with Congress on legislation this year to bring more choices and better benefits to Medicare and has committed up to \$400 billion over the next ten years in his FY 2004 budget to pay for modernizing and improving Medicare."

The President's framework will give all Medicare beneficiaries access to:

- Prescription drug coverage that enables seniors to get the medicines they need, without the government dictating their drug choices;
- Choice of an individual health



## P.A.C.E.

Political Attempt to Control Education—that is what I think the acronym really means.

Yes, P.A.C.E. (Providers of Approved Continued Education) is a politically motivated attempt to wrest control of continuing education from our colleges and have it approved through FCLB and CCE. Notice that P.A.C.E. calls for its official establishment by the CCE and its application to be handled by the P.A.C.E. committee of FCLB.

If this takes place, politically appointed State Board members will then control the administration of our continuing education/relicensure credits and the FCLB/CCE will undoubtedly adjudicate that which should be taught and approved. Don't our educational institutions and the ACC (Association of Chiropractic Colleges) have anything to say? But some say the CCE is non political! Well my friends, if you really think that ACA's Mr. Cuneo is correct, and that the de-franchising of Life College did not have some political nuances, then the wool is being pulled over your eyes. The recent injunction against CCE granted by a federal judge, certainly casts some doubt as to CCE's motives.

In my opinion doctors, the "P.A.C.E." effort is simply the first step to yet another test being put upon the profession, a test to maintain your license. Our students now face 4 parts of a National Board Examination and then most states also retain some state Board

testing. As if this is not enough, with this proposal, once you graduate and become licensed, you face the possibility of being re-tested every five years or so in order to maintain your license. Think of how this will impact the student enrollment in our colleges. Think too, of the costs you, the DC will face when you are forced to take these tests.

Realistically fellow chiropractors, can you see the FCLB and the CCE doing all this approval and the administration of the profession's continuing education for free? Even without a testing module the cost for continuing education will skyrocket.

Right now, provided most commonly through our chiropractic colleges, the cost of continuing education is reasonable and competition between colleges keeps it that way. Entrepreneurial efforts may lack quality control, but then it's up to our state boards, state and national organizations to accept or approve such educational programs. Those courses that are approved through our chiropractic colleges must comply with their standards.

In the final analysis, education should be provided and controlled through our educational institutions, not by the politically dominated agendas of state boards and agencies.

"Enuf" said.

*Fred Barge, DC, PhC*  
Chair, Editorial Committee

## DIALOGUE ON CHIROPRACTIC EDUCATION

*continued from page 1*

*possible means of restoring the urgently needed balance and fairness in the chiropractic educational accreditation process.*

*We therefore offer to facilitate, support and participate in a broad-based conference through which these issues can be discussed and a proactive course of action determined.*

ICA intends to seek the broadest possible participation in this dialogue, help of professional consultants, a full legal review of chiropractic definitions and authorities under state law; and a careful examination of the methodologies and procedures applied by other health professions in evaluating and accrediting their educational institutions.

ICA invites all interested organizations to consider how the chiropractic profession can come together in a meaningful, positive dialogue to provide for an accreditation system that is responsive to all, prejudicial to none, and focused on the unique nature of chiropractic science, art, philosophy and practice.

ICA has asked the advice of a number of educational authorities including representatives of the U.S. Department of Education, and invited their partici-

ipation. ICA believes that it is in the best interests of the profession to explore all options in an effort to build the strongest possible foundation for chiropractic education. ICA's Board of Directors has made it clear that this is not an undertaking the ICA intends to do on its own. It is simply looking to start this urgent process and is hoping for the broadest possible participation.

