

Chiropractic Through the Eyes of Physiotherapists, Manual Therapists, and Osteopaths in The Netherlands

- **Journal:** J Altern Complement Med 2000 Oct;6(5):437-43
- **Authors:** Langworthy JM, Smink RD
- **Host:** Institute for Musculoskeletal Research & Clinical Implementation, Bournemouth, UK. imrci.jlangworthy@aecc.ac.uk
- **PMID:** 11059506

OBJECTIVES: To identify current perceptions and levels of awareness of chiropractic among physiotherapists, osteopaths, and manual therapists in The Netherlands. In addition, to investigate how future communication and interprofessional collaboration between the four professions may be improved in the interests of patient care as perceived by these groups.

DESIGN: Four hundred and ninety-four (494) questionnaires were distributed to 100 manual therapists, 299 physiotherapists, and 95 osteopaths across The Netherlands. Questionnaires were identical for each profession.

RESULTS: An overall response rate of 48% was achieved. The majority of practitioners reported limited knowledge of chiropractic. However, chiropractic was generally perceived as a primary health care profession most suited to extramural care. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the manual therapists regarded it as direct competition, while 45% of the osteopaths and 48% of physiotherapists considered chiropractic complementary to their professions. While the majority of osteopaths felt that statutory self-regulation should be granted to chiropractors in The Netherlands, this was not supported by the manual therapists and physiotherapists. Moreover, there was only minimal (4%-11%) support for the availability of chiropractic treatment as part of the Dutch National Health Service. Although most respondents had never had contact with a local chiropractor, all osteopaths and 50% of the manual therapists and physiotherapists considered chiropractors to be skilled practitioners. However, this was more likely to be so if they had had contact with a chiropractor in the past. Current levels of communication and cooperation were thought to be poor to nonexistent although the majority welcomed closer links, particularly in relation to the treatment of spinal complaints.

CONCLUSION: Greater awareness appears to be associated with increased levels of interprofessional acceptance and respect. The professions may wish to pursue areas of broad agreement identified by their practitioners in the interests of professional development and optimal standards of care for individuals in need of musculoskeletal services.