

U.S. military chiropractic program excludes subluxation, children, pregnant women!

When the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) first announced it was going to design a Chiropractic Health Care Demonstration Project to study the possible applications of chiropractic in the military, most D.C.s were excited by the prospect of having the DOD see first hand how subluxation correction could benefit military personnel and their families.

Unfortunately, as a result, the Demonstration Project rules state that participating chiropractors must "follow practice guidelines as established in the Guidelines for Chiropractic Quality Assurance and Practice Parameters: Proceedings of the Mercy Center Consensus Conference... (Mercy Guidelines)." It is doubtful that any of the representatives working with the DOD alerted the agency to the fact that the Mercy Guidelines have been rejected by nearly every chiropractic organization in the world, or that other guidelines, such as those developed by the Council on Chiropractic Practice, exist.

In addition, the demonstration will involve only "spine-related neuromusculoskeletal disorders." Further, "patients under 17 years of age and female patients who are, or may be, pregnant are excluded." Although the project cited "liability issues" as the reason for excluding these prime candidates for chiropractic care, the exclusion is in keeping with the Mercy bias toward chiropractic as a treatment for low back pain in adults.

The demonstration project rules do not refer to subluxation correction or include any allowance for that type of care. Yet, the future role of chiropractic in the military health care system will be determined, in great part, by the results of this demonstration project.

"These rules are absolutely unacceptable, "A demonstration project which does not involve the detection and correction of vertebral subluxations is not a chiropractic project. This has nothing to do with chiropractic."

"When other nations are formulating their own chiropractic laws and programs, they often look to the United States for guidance. If the U.S. sets a bad example, other countries may follow. We need to change the parameters of this program if we are to protect subluxation-based chiropractic around the world."

"At the very least, we need to let DOD officials know that the profession does not approve of the program the way it is currently designed and wants a true chiropractic demonstration project," ([click here to read the full text of this letter](#)).

It is important to emphasize that chiropractors are very interested in helping members of the Armed Forces and their families, but that we do not wish to duplicate medical services and should therefore be used to provide subluxation correction care.

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Although you can use the WCA letter as a "model," it is best to express your own concerns in your own words. Your letter should contain one or more of the following points:

- ▶ The Mercy Guidelines do not reflect the practice purposes or methods of mainstream chiropractic
- ▶ Almost all chiropractic organizations have either rejected or failed to endorse the Mercy Guidelines

- ▶ The primary purpose of chiropractic is to detect and correct subluxations
- ▶ Chiropractic can be beneficial to children and pregnant women
- ▶ The World Chiropractic Alliance represents the interests of subluxation-based chiropractic and should be included in the DOD process
- ▶ Chiropractic is a separate and unique health care field and not a medical treatment
- ▶ As a subluxation-based chiropractor, you feel it is critical that the CCP Guidelines be used instead of the Mercy Guidelines as the practice criteria for the DOD demonstration project.