

Physical Therapists Jump on Subluxation Bandwagon. Who's Next?

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Who's next indeed and will we be holding the door for them? The American Physical Therapy Association recently attempted to intervene in the HCFA lawsuit stating in a Declaration that:

"...physical therapists can and do perform manual manipulations of the spine to correct a subluxation, where indicated." (1)

Our enemies outside the profession declared chiropractors quacks and charlatans for a hundred years and as anyone who has read my articles over the past five years I have revealed how these same detractors were moving closer and closer to claiming the "elusive" subluxation as theirs. To make matters worse are the individuals within our own profession who continue to deny and denigrate the subluxation theory along with those who practice subluxation based chiropractic.

Worse still is the fact that these are not people who are considered "fringe." These are college presidents, respected researchers, association leaders and state board members. And yet the profession continues to employ them, publish their articles, give them accolades and throw money at them all the while adding authority to their unsubstantiated, ignorant and politically motivated opinions that have no basis in science.

It is time. It is time for leaders in the profession to get on one side of the fence or the other. It is time for them to stop saying and doing one thing for the politicians and another for their membership. It is time for the members of the national and state associations to push those leaders who refuse to do this to one side or the other based on their past actions and their support of anti-subluxation rhetoric through deliberate promotion or insidious silence.

It is time for those chiropractors that do not belong to a state or national association to realize that they hold a license to practice a profession that is regulated by state and federal laws. Those state and federal bodies that regulate them are either run or influenced by chiropractors with particular views who are using their power and influence to affect the present and future landscape of the profession. It is time for us to acknowledge who these people are and decide whether or not they deserve our continued support.

The Physical Therapists are not alone. While they manipulate and are reimbursed by Medicare to the tune of \$25 million dollars a year for it, physiatrists also manipulate, occupational therapists manipulate (and are paid for the service under Medicare) (2-3), Naturopaths manipulate, massage therapists manipulate and there are 45,000 doctors of osteopathy who are allowed to manipulate.

Check out an osteopathic school's catalog and you will find that the modern day osteopath receives a minimum of one year MANDATORY training in OMT, many schools require more training and all offer post grad programs, residencies, internships, fellowships etc in OMT. I urge you to check out how contemporary researchers and educators in osteopathy feel about the "osteopathic lesion" and its role in health and disease. Take an osteopathic school's catalog and compare the mission statements to those of chiropractic schools and see if you could tell the difference if the names of the professions were interchanged.

How about this statement from the American Osteopathic Association submitted to the House Veteran's Affairs Committee: (4)

"Doctors of chiropractic are not fully licensed physicians and therefore do not have the necessary medical knowledge or clinical training to be given 'full scope of practice' in the care of

musculoskeletal and neurological conditions. Although many conditions are treatable via osteopathic manipulation or chiropractic treatment, treatment should be prescribed by an osteopathic or allopathic physician after the patient has been thoroughly examined and evaluated."

(P.S. DO's get paid for E & M services in addition to their "manipulation" and they get paid for the x-ray under Medicare) (5)

I'm not exactly sure what has to happen for our profession to get the message. Does somebody have to knock on our door and take our license away from us before we get indignant? Well, keep a look out because it is happening to many of our fellow chiropractors while the majority of our leaders are remaining silent. Look at the events in Colorado and several other states, look at Saskatchewan. We now have at least one state where chiropractic IS the practice of medicine and we have at least one school that will be offering the Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine degree.

Let me be clear - chiropractic is not my religion, BJ is not my God and vertebral subluxation is not some vague metaphysical concept. The subluxation is a pathophysiological process with components that we can measure with technology and skill. And as Dr. Ralph Boone - Editor Emeritus of JVSR has expressed (6), the subluxation has holistic components related through a governing philosophy along with mechanistic components such as biomechanics and associated physiological changes. Whatever group ends up knowing more about this process will be the group that is allowed to claim it as its own and it is that group of practitioners that the public should feel the safest entrusting their spines and their health with.

If you are not a subscriber to JVSR, the only peer reviewed chiropractic research journal devoted to the science of vertebral subluxation, then I urge you to become one today and support what belongs to you. As always, I look forward to your feedback, comments and suggestions.

Regards,

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