

Letter to the Editor -- National Post -- February 21, 2005

RE: The Value of Chiropractic Care: A Debate – February 17, 2005

In response to J. William Kinsinger's fallacious jabs at the chiropractic profession, I wish to set the record straight. Chiropractors are highly trained and skilled health care professionals with a minimum of seven years post-secondary education including four years at a recognized, accredited chiropractic college. Their education is focused on the neuro-musculoskeletal system, in addition to a thorough understanding of all anatomical systems. Our members are regulated under provincial statute in every province in Canada. This regulatory process grants the chiropractor the right to use the title "Doctor" – in Ontario this is granted to only 4 other health care professions (dentistry, medicine, optometry and psychology).

Dr. Kinsinger incorrectly asserts that the Ontario Chiropractic Association (OCA) states "our children deserve to be treated naturally, not with dangerous chemical drugs and unproven surgeries." This is certainly not an official position of the OCA. Chiropractors have the expertise and skills to treat patients of all ages, including children, where intervention is justified and appropriate; yet the majority of our patients are adults with back pain, neck pain, headaches or other neuro-musculoskeletal complaints. Last year more than one million Ontarians benefited from chiropractic treatment.

Contrary to the author's suggestion, there is a very large and growing volume of scientific research supporting chiropractic care. The most recent evidence includes studies published in the British Medical Journal and the American Medical Association's Archives of Internal Medicine – both of which support the use of chiropractic care as effective and appropriate. Dr. Kinsinger ignores the strong body of evidence – and medical guidelines from around the world -- favouring chiropractic care as safe and effective treatment for neuro-musculoskeletal conditions. He also ignores the evidence that the risks from chiropractic care for back and neck pain are far fewer than for other treatments such as surgery, pain medication and the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. Instead, the author dismisses these findings and the actions of more than 4.5 million Canadians as "dubious" and resorts to a polemic based on prejudice, myth, and deceit, and not on sound research.

Fortunately, the days when such misleading rhetoric is effective have passed. Rather, patients and health care providers alike are searching for ways to better coordinate and deliver care using the best treatment and the most appropriate team of providers for the condition.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dean Wright
President
Ontario Chiropractic Association