World Federation of Chiropractic Quarterly Report

By Editorial Staff

Australia

The historic Wilk case, won by the chiropractic profession in 1987, exposed and undermined political medicine’s illegal conspiracy against the chiropractic profession in the U.S. This conspiracy was based on the portrayal of the chiropractic profession as an unscientific cult. The Australian Medical Association (AMA) and its partners have acted similarly to the American Medical Association since 1978; it was only in late 2002 that the AMA finally rescinded its policy that chiropractic was an "exclusive dogma." A paper by Keith Simpson, DC, PhD, in the current issue of the journal Chiropractic History examines this exclusive dogma policy, including the way it was used to exclude chiropractors from research, workers’ compensation schemes and other third-party funding during the 1990s. Although the exclusivity has been officially removed, it obviously has a major continuing effect. 1

Belgium

In 1999, closing a chapter of history in which chiropractors had been prosecuted for practising medicine without a licence, the Belgian government announced its intention to recognise and regulate the practice of chiropractic. That legislative process remains far from complete, but Belgium’s 70 chiropractors have seen markedly improved acceptance. Dr. Pierre Mercier, president of the Union Belge des Chiropractors, reports that medical referrals are now common, and that this year, for the first time, medical students were exposed to a lecture on chiropractic by a chiropractor as part of their mandatory course requirement. This was a new course on complementary and alternative health care at the State University of Ghent, one of the largest universities in the country.

Brazil

The 37-member chiropractic profession in Brazil will almost double in size this year, with the graduation of approximately 35 students from the inaugural class at the University Anhembi Morumbi (UAM) in S-ào Paulo, and will then double again the following year with graduating classes from both UAM and Feevale University in Novo Hamburgo. In preparation for this growth, the Associacao Brasileira de Quiropraxia, in partnership with UAM and Feevale, has had a sustained campaign for the past three years to gain legislative
recognition for the chiropractic profession. Draft legislation was referred for consideration by three standing committees that look at all legislation for health professionals. In November 2003, in a committee room in Brasilia filled with chiropractic students and supporters, the draft legislation was unanimously approved by the most "difficult" committee, the Work Commission, which is required to approve any new occupation receiving legislative recognition. The bill now proceeds to the Justice Commission before being returned to the legislature for a final vote.

Canada

The profession continues to strengthen its position within mainstream health care. In Ontario, there has been a recent government grant of CA$1.95 million to support pilot projects that include chiropractic services within multidisciplinary primary health care centres, the basic new structures being developed during primary health care reform in the province. Dr. David Cassidy, now professor of epidemiology at the University of Toronto’s School of Medicine, has joined Dr. Mark Erwin, who holds a federally funded chiropractic research chair at the university, giving the profession a strong new presence at one of Canada’s leading universities.

The Canadian Chiropractic Association (CCA) and its provincial divisions are co-sponsoring two major initiatives: a project to replace and update the CCA 1993 clinical guidelines; and a 2003-2004 media campaign thought to be the largest ever launched anywhere by the chiropractic profession.

The high-profile Lewis Inquest in Toronto, being followed by chiropractors worldwide, is near its end. The jury has retired to consider its verdict and recommendations, and is expected to report in mid-January. For detailed reports on the inquest and an overview of all the CCA’s programmes and activities, visit www.ccachiro.org.

Greece

The new president of the national association, the Hellenic Chiropractors Association (HCA), with 20 members, is Dr. Katerina Moustaka (Life West, 1998), of Athens. Because several students are expected to return to enter practice in the near future, the HCA is experiencing steady growth. Dr. Moustaka, who also holds a medical degree, advises that chiropractic is still not well-known in Greece and is resisted by the medical community - realities she and the HCA are now trying to change via a more active public relations programme.
Although the practice of chiropractic is not recognised by law in Greece, no legal action has been taken to restrict chiropractors, since a case against three doctors of chiropractic for practising medicine without a licence was dismissed in the early 1990s. This case established, among other things, that spinal manipulation was not a medical act in Greece. Dr. Moustaka advises that few MDs have interest or training in manual medicine, although there is a new organization led by physical therapists: the Hellenic Manipulative Therapy Association. For more information, contact Dr. Moustaka at chirokatgr -at- hotmail.com.

**United Arab Emirates (UAE)**

One of the officials met by WFC representatives at a WHO meeting in Italy earlier this month was Dr. Sassan Behjat, the coordinator for the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Ministry of Health. Dr. Behjat, trained as a homeopathic doctor in India and with a Masters in Public Health from Harvard, has confirmed that there are currently 10 doctors of chiropractic in the UAE and that it now has licensing exams for chiropractic practice. Anyone who has graduated from an accredited chiropractic programme and has two years of experience in practice is eligible to sit these licensing exams and obtain a work permit. For more detailed information, visit www.moh.gov.ae.

**Reference**


**Editor’s note:** Doctors of chiropractic worldwide are encouraged to submit news and articles on the status of the profession in their respective countries to *Dynamic Chiropractic* for possible publication. All information should be sent to editorial -at- mpamedia.com.