

# Chiropractic

Putting *health*  
and *care* back into  
*healthcare...*





The Alliance of UK Chiropractors (AUKC) is an affiliation of professional organisations dedicated to the protection, unity and strengthening of the Chiropractic profession in the UK. The AUKC supports the vision of a vitalistic model of health and wellbeing, which can positively impact the health care of our nation.

Throughout this document there are many examples of the immense

impact that Chiropractic can have on improving the health of the nation and putting Health and Care back into Healthcare.

## **Our vision**

Our vision is to create a Vitalistic Chiropractic model of Health and Wellbeing for families within the UK creating a Positive Impact on the Healthcare of our entire Nation.

# Putting health and care back into healthcare

The current Healthcare crisis is one of a Self-Care crisis. It is not that we lack the understanding of an acute care model of traumas and surgeries etc, it is that we have not taken a greater responsibility for what we can do to educate ourselves to activate the body's best version of itself through self-education, responsibility and choice.

There are challenging times ahead for the government with the financial burden on the NHS increasing.

The new focus of the NHS is on value, especially new, valuable procedures that are shown to be better value than current, out-of-date forms of treatment.



## How Chiropractic can save the government money

The Health Care system must find ways to slow the rate of spending whilst still delivering quality healthcare. The Chiropractic profession is poised to help millions suffering from spinal disorders that will save the healthcare system millions of pounds by avoiding the use of opioid drugs, MRI scans<sup>1</sup>, expensive hospital stays, and ineffective and over-utilised spinal surgery based on a disproved disc theory<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>M Brandt, Stamford University Medical Centre, "MRI Abundance May Lead to Excess In Back Surgery" (Oct 14, 2009)  
JD Baras and LC Baker, "Magnetic Resonance Imaging and low Back Pain Care for Medicare Patients" Health Aff (Millwood) 28/6(2009):1133-40

<sup>2</sup>MC Jensen, MN Brant-Zawadzki, N Obuchowski, MT Modic, D Malkasian, JS Ross, "Magnetic Resonance Imaging Of The Lumbar Spine In People Without Back Pain," N Engl J Med. 331 (1994):69-73  
RA Deyo and DL Patrick, Hope or Hype: The Obsession with Medical Advances and the High Cost of False Promises (2002):191.

Low back pain is one of the most common causes of disability among people of working age and its impact on industry is enormous.

It is estimated that four out of five adults (80%) will experience back pain at some point in their lives<sup>3</sup> and that 10% of sufferers have visited a practitioner of complimentary

medicine<sup>4</sup>. The Chartered Institute of Personal Development reported that absenteeism costs UK companies £673 per employee per year.

Musculoskeletal injuries, back pain and stress appear in the top five most common causes for short and long term absence and are key contributors to this cost<sup>5</sup>.

The positive impact that Chiropractic can have on the Health Care of the UK can be most readily equated to the reduced burden on an ever-increasingly stretched NHS. When used as Primary Healthcare Providers, Chiropractors can help to:

- **Reduce hospital admissions**
- **Reduce days spent in hospitals**
- **Reduce pharmaceutical costs**
- **Reduce outpatient procedures**

The results of a seven year clinical and cost utilisation study in Illinois demonstrated **decreases of 60.2% in hospital admissions, 59.0% less hospital days, 62.0% less outpatient surgeries and procedures and 85% less pharmaceutical costs when compared with conventional medicine** IPA performance for the same health maintenance organisation product in the same geography and time frame<sup>6</sup>.

The inclusion of evidence-based healthcare approaches such as Chiropractic care within emerging value-based health plans represents a significant advancement in cost and clinical effectiveness.

Recent research documented in “*A Hospital-Based Standardized Spine Care Pathway: report of a Multidisciplinary, Evidence-Based process*”<sup>7</sup> confirms this perspective.

<sup>3</sup>Palmer KT, Walsh K, et al. Back Pain in Britain: comparison of two prevalence surveys at an interval of 10 years BMJ 2000

<sup>4</sup>Dept of Health Stats Div. The prevalence of back pain in Great Britain in 1998. London: Government Statistical Service, 1999

<sup>5</sup>CIPD Absence management report 2011.

<sup>6</sup>Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics (JMPT) 2007 Vol 30 Issue 4: Clinical Utilization and Cost Outcomes from an Integrative Medicine Independent Physician Association

<sup>7</sup>Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics (JMPT) 2011 Feb;34 (2) – 98 -106: A hospital-based standardized spine care pathway: report of a multidisciplinary, evidence-based process



According to the study, those 402 low back pain patients treated exclusively by Chiropractors at the low back pain program implemented at Jordan Hospital, Plymouth, Massachusetts **achieved successful clinical outcomes in an average of 5.2 visits at the low cost of \$302 (£193) per case**, whilst maintaining satisfaction rates above 95%. In addition, self reported pain and disability scores were reduced by about 70% over the course of a few weeks.

These studies show the enormous power and benefits of 2 things:

**1. The utilisation of Chiropractic in a primary care setting.**

**2. The magnitude of successful outcomes, both clinical and cost, that can be achieved when all members of the health sciences work together as a team for the betterment of the patient putting aside all professional rivalries.**

With the recent publication of the Mercer Report<sup>8</sup>, published in peer-reviewed literature in October 2009, Chiropractic's reputation as being a cost-effective modality has been further enhanced. Prepared by two distinguished medical researchers using EU figures and extrapolated to USA utilisation of Chiropractic care their findings were:

1. Chiropractic care is widely used with almost half of all patients with persistent back pain seeking out this form of treatment

2. Chiropractic care *"for low back & neck pain is highly cost effective, represents a good value in comparison to medical physician care and to widely accepted cost effectiveness thresholds"*

3. Chiropractic care & health insurance coverage... *"we project that insurance coverage for chiropractic physician care... is likely to drive improved cost effectiveness of US care"*

**Put simply, Chiropractic care is hugely successful and provides great value.**

<sup>8</sup>Choudrey N, Milstein A, - 2009 Mercer Report: Do Chiropractic Physician Services for Treatment of Low Back and Neck Pain Improve the Value of Health Benefit Plans?

# What is Chiropractic?

**Chiropractic is a health care discipline, which emphasizes the inherent recuperative power of the body to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery.**

The practice of Chiropractic focuses on the relationship between structure (primarily the spine) and function (as coordinated by the nervous system) and how that relationship affects the preservation and restoration of health.

Chiropractors recognise the value and responsibility of working in co-operation with other health care practitioners when in the best interest of the patient. There are obviously limitations to any practice and there are times when pharmaceuticals or surgery may be appropriate.

## › Benefits of Chiropractic

### **Aids pain management**

Chiropractic care is effective for pain relief for those suffering from moderate to severe pain<sup>9</sup>.

### **Increases mobility**

After events such as accidents, mobility may be reduced. Chiropractic care can help an individual regain their mobility whilst strengthening their muscles and relieving pain. Chiropractors can advise on specific exercises to help recovery and regain movement<sup>10</sup>.


### **Avoid drug side effects**

Chiropractic is a practice that revolves around medicine-free treatment and no drugs are administered, which means that there will be no potential adverse drug reactions. The absence of drug-use in Chiropractic treatment is also beneficial for health in the long-term as it prevents drug addiction or long-term dependency.

**The perception of Chiropractic is often limited to the treatment of back pain, but as Primary Healthcare Providers we are consulted about a whole range of conditions.**

<sup>9</sup> Journal of Manipulative & Physiological Therapeutics 1197, 20(4):235-240 "The Chiropractic Outcome Study: pain, functional ability & satisfaction with care"

<sup>10</sup> The Rand Study

A young woman with long, wavy blonde hair is smiling broadly, looking towards the camera. She is wearing a blue denim jacket over a black top. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with tall grass and a body of water in the distance under a warm, hazy sky.

**“Chiropractors also place an emphasis on nutrition, exercise, wellness and healthy lifestyle modifications which, when correctly applied, will improve the health of individuals.”**



# Utilisation of Chiropractic and the NHS

Currently access to Chiropractic care is not readily available through the NHS and is dependant on localised NHS Trust agreements and GP-gated restrictions. This obviously leads to under-utilisation of Chiropractic and a greater cost to the NHS. The provisions for Chiropractors to gain Any Qualified Provider status (AQP) may improve this however they are tailored to a managed care environment.

The best model for the provision of Chiropractic service to NHS patients would be one of independent assessment and self-referral, much like that which currently exists between a patient and their registered GP.

Using this model the patient can either self-refer for assessment

by their Chiropractor or their GP can refer them for care. This would result in quicker resolutions and better clinical outcomes for the patient and a reduced cost of care (i.e. better value) for the NHS.

The Chiropractor would therefore be working in co operation with the NHS and the GP in particular.





As primary healthcare practitioners, Chiropractors are well placed to assess the patient as a first port of call, place them in the appropriate care pathway and maintain an overview of the full clinical process.

Referral to other healthcare professionals when necessary is commonplace to enhance the overall outcome. The best model of care is one that is patient-centred and where the individual choices of the patient are paramount. It is in this way that Chiropractors can be a major part of the healthcare team and both provide better value and better clinical outcomes for all.

Whilst it is easy to read these words and understand them, the reality is that the modern health care system, which has evolved over the last century does not reflect this sentiment.

The modern approach to health care has become highly expensive and technologically based, focusing mainly on diagnosing disease and treating it rather than exploring the true meaning of health and how it can be achieved and then maintained. Modern socialised

health care has actually turned into a sickness care industry because you have to be sick in order to qualify for care.

Health is achieved through striving towards a healthy lifestyle. The future health of the nation can be fulfilled by creating a health care system that provides education and example, and by dismantling the established sickness care system and its costly palliative approach. Chiropractic can help to put health and care back into healthcare.

“The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest her or his patients in the care of the human frame in a proper diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease.”

Thomas A Edison

# Cost effectiveness of Chiropractic

In recent years, numerous independent researchers and various government agencies have conducted studies, which focus on the efficacy, appropriateness and cost effectiveness of Chiropractic care.

## ➤ The Manga Report<sup>11</sup>

In 1993, the Ontario Ministry of Health commissioned and funded a study to examine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of Chiropractic management of low back pain. The report concluded that:

“There would be highly significant cost savings if more management of low-back pain was transferred from physicians to Chiropractors... Users of Chiropractic care have substantially lower health care costs, especially inpatient costs, than those who use medical care only.”

## ➤ Victorian Work Care Scheme<sup>12</sup>

This workers' compensation study published in the Chiropractic Journal of Australia compared Chiropractic and medical management of 1,996 cases of work-related mechanical low back pain. The number of compensation days (paid days off from work) taken by claimants was found to be significantly lower with Chiropractic care (an average of 6.26 days for Chiropractic patients and 25.56 days for medical patients). The average cost of the Chiropractic care was \$392 & for medical management, \$1,569, or four times greater than Chiropractic management. There was also a significantly lower incidence of progression to a chronic low back pain status in those patients who received Chiropractic care.

## ➤ UK Beam Trial 2004<sup>13</sup>

This study of physical therapy for low back pain shows convincingly that both manipulation alone and manipulation followed by exercise provide cost effective additions to care in general practice. The study authors stated ‘Indeed, as we trained practice teams in the best care of back pain, we may have under estimated the benefit of physical therapy (spinal manipulation) when compared with “usual care” in general practice.’ The detailed clinical outcomes report reinforces these positive findings by showing that the improvements in health status reported by patients reflect statistically significant improvements in function, disability, pain, physical and mental aspects of life quality and beliefs about back pain.

<sup>11</sup> The MANGA Report (1993) “A Study to Examine the Effectiveness & Cost-Effectiveness of Chiropractic Management of Low-Back Pain

<sup>12</sup> Mechanical Low-Back Pain: A Comparison of Medical and Chiropractic Management Within the Victorian Work Care Scheme. Ebrall, PS. Chiropractic Journal of Australia - 1992;22:47-5

<sup>13</sup> UK Beam Trial - British Medical Journal 2004 (Dec 11); 329 (7479): 1381

# Comparison

Doctors of Chiropractic have long been dedicated to delivering the safest and most effective methods of care for their patients. To achieve this, the Chiropractic profession has been dedicated to scientific evaluation for their diagnostic procedures, treatment methods and techniques.

## ➤ Chiropractic Treatment v Outpatient Management for Low Back Pain

In a randomised comparison study over a three year period British medical researchers found Chiropractic treatment significantly more effective than hospital outpatient treatment, especially in patients with chronic and severe back pain. Those treated by Doctors of Chiropractic gained more benefit and long term satisfaction than those treated by hospitals<sup>14</sup>.

## ➤ Chiropractic Treatment v Physiotherapy

A randomised comparison of four treatment types by Dutch medical researchers, on patients who suffered from persistent back and neck pain found that spinal manipulation provided greater improvement of symptoms compared with physical therapy. The patients receiving spinal manipulation had better physical function and less pain at 12 months than those receiving physiotherapy<sup>15</sup>.

## ➤ Chiropractic Treatment v Bed Rest

A Study published in the British Medical Journal followed a group of 152 patients suffering from acute low back pain who were treated either by spinal manipulation or bed rest. After 1 week 50% of the individuals in the spinal manipulation group were symptom free compared with 27% of those receiving bed rest only<sup>16</sup>.

## ➤ Chiropractic Treatment v Deep Heat Applications

A study published in the American Journal of Physical Medicine found that Patients suffering from a prolapsed intervertebral disc who received spinal manipulation showed significantly better post-treatment range of motion and a shorter time to obtain pain relief than those receiving deep heat applications. "It was concluded that manipulation therapy as shown by this study is superior to the conventional method."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> BMJ1995;311 doi10.1136/bmj.311.7001.349 (published 05 August 1995)

<sup>15</sup> Randomized Clinical Trial of Manipulative Therapy and Physiotherapy for Persistent Back and Neck Complaints: Results of One Year Follow Up. Koes, B.W. et al. British Medical Journal - 1992;304:601-605.

<sup>16</sup> Low-back pain Treated by Manipulation. Coyer AB and Curwin I. British Medical Journal - 1955;1:705-707.

<sup>17</sup> Relative Therapeutic Efficacy of Vertebral Manipulation & Conventional Treatment in Back pain Management. Nwuga VC. American Journal of Physical Medicine - 1982;61:273-278

Manipulation in the Treatment of Low-back Pain - A Randomised Clinical Trial. Rasmussen GG. Manuelle Medizin - 1979;1:8-10.

# Sport and Exercise

**You are never too young or too old to enjoy the benefits of regular physical activity.**

Chiropractors encourage and promote regular exercise to all patients educating them on the benefits that regular exercise will have on their health. These benefits include protecting against heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, obesity and back pain as well as increasing energy levels.

## ➤ Why Exercise is Essential if You Have Neck Pain

Since exercise often leads to improved posture, range of motion and functionality of your body, it can help prevent chronic neck pain from developing. Exercise helps prevent and relieve pain through a number of mechanisms including strengthening key support muscles & restoring flexibility.

Not surprisingly, repetitive strain injuries have become increasingly common as so many people spend most of their work days sitting in front of computers. Many types

of neck pain can be traced back to poor posture at work or during one's commute.

A study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*<sup>18</sup> and funded by the National Institutes of Health, highlighted that medication is not the best option for treating neck pain. After following 272 neck-pain patients for 12 weeks, those who used a Chiropractor or exercised were more than twice as likely to be pain free compared to those who took medication.

## ➤ Physical Exercise in Schools

There is a health crisis in our younger generation. Many children are unable to fully perform physically and reach their expected physical milestones. Many children are not achieving the basic levels of literacy, numeracy and the knowledge needed to help them live long and healthy lives. Encouraging children to perform regular activities from an early age

will help build habits benefiting postural muscles as well as improve fitness levels. Research shows that concentration levels and learning ability are improved with regular exercises that focus on posture and co-ordination (TES April 2005.) Chiropractic is perfectly placed to help the children of our communities to learn more about health.

<sup>18</sup> Annals of Internal Medicine January 3, 2012 Vol 156 no.1 Part 1-10



## > Sport

There is a growing use and acknowledgment of the importance of Chiropractors by sportsmen and women. Chiropractic offers a balanced approach to the recovery and healing of sports injuries by many athletes, including premiership footballers and Olympians, many of whom would now not be without their Chiropractic care.



**“Chiropractic care helps to achieve maximum health and peak performance.”**

# Chiropractic is for everyone

**The Chiropractic profession is strongly committed to assisting the future generations of the UK to learn to take personal responsibility for their own health and the health of their children in years to come.**

## › Children

We believe, from our experience that Chiropractic care allows children to reach those physical milestones that at the moment are not being achieved. By allowing the spine, nervous system and mechanical structures to function in a balanced way our children can recover from illness and injury better and take part in sporting activities more confidently.

## › The Elderly

Chiropractors acknowledge that the elderly population in the UK is increasing. Chiropractors can help to improve joint mobility and subsequently the quality of life of this ageing population. Improving patient mobility can enable the older person to remain independent which can have a profound influence on perceived quality of life as well as reducing the subsequent costs incurred for assistance. Chiropractic can reduce the burden on the NHS and will provide a useful service to the elderly in the community.

## › Families

Our purpose is to educate and adjust as many families as possible toward optimal health, through Chiropractic. At its core, Chiropractic emphasizes the body's innate ability to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery. Although spinal adjustments make up part of the wellness equation, a vitalistic approach to family healthcare means that individuals must make conscious choices to support their body's ability to function at its best. These include avoiding physical, emotional and chemical stressors that affect nervous system function and impede optimal health.





## Regulation

The General Chiropractic Council (GCC) was instituted under the Chiropractors Act 1994. As a statutory body set up by law the GCC has three main duties:

- 1. Protecting the public by regulating Chiropractors**
- 2. Setting the standards of Chiropractic education, conduct and practice**
- 3. Ensuring the development of the profession.**

Anybody who calls themselves a Chiropractor in the UK must be registered with the GCC, otherwise they are committing a criminal offence.

To register as a Chiropractor, an individual has to satisfy the educational requirements for registration & show they are of good health and character.



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