

# How chiropractic wellness care can improve your quality of life and save you money

by Dr. Christopher Kent

Last year, I was honoured with the opportunity to present testimony to the Senate Appropriations Committee. A portion of the testimony addressed how chiropractic care could reduce healthcare costs to senior citizens. Yet, the findings should be of interest to any person seeking to enjoy health while minimizing medical expenses. Here is a portion of that testimony:

## Healthcare Costs: A National Dilemma

"This Committee is well aware that the cost of medical care in the United States exceeds one trillion dollars annually, and these costs are continuing to rise. As policy makers consider strategies to reduce medical expenditures without compromising the health of our citizens, we offer chiropractic services as a viable path to achieving affordable healthcare for all Americans.

"The results of several patient-based studies suggest that chiropractic care may result in significant savings of healthcare dollars. One such study conducted an analysis of an insurance database comparing persons over 75 years of age receiving chiropractic care with non-chiropractic patients. The analysis showed that the persons receiving chiropractic care reported better overall health, spent fewer days in hospitals and nursing homes, used fewer prescription drugs, and were more active than the non-chiropractic patients. Furthermore, the chiropractic patients reported 21% less time in hospitals over the previous 3 years. [1]

"Another study surveyed 311 chiropractic patients, aged 65 years and older, who had received chiropractic care for 5 years or longer. Chiropractic patients, when compared with US citizens of the same age, spent only 31% of the national average for health care services. The chiropractic patients also experienced 50% fewer medical provider visits than their comparable peers. The health habits of patients receiving maintenance care were better overall than the general population, including decreased use of cigarettes and decreased use of non-prescription drugs." [2]

## Quality-of-Life

In addition to the studies cited in the testimony, another major study evaluated quality-of-life issues in persons receiving wellness care. Blanks, Schuster and Dobson [3] published the results of a retrospective assessment of subluxation-based chiropractic care on self-related health, wellness and quality of life. This is, to my knowledge, the largest study of its kind ever undertaken regarding a chiropractic population. After surveying 2,818 respondents in 156 practices, a strong connection was found between persons receiving Network chiropractic care and self-reported improvement in health, wellness and quality-of-life. 95% of respondents reported that their expectations had been met, and 99% wished to continue care.

Clearly, there is a growing body of evidence that wellness care provided by doctors of chiropractic may reduce health care costs, improve health behaviours, and improve patient perceived quality-of-life.

## References

1. Coulter ID, Hurwitz EL, Aronow HU, et al: "Chiropractic patients in a comprehensive home-based geriatric assessment, follow-up and health promotion program." *Topics in Clinical Chiropractic* 1996;3(2):46.
2. Rupert RL, Manello D, Sandefur R: "Maintenance care: health promotion services administered to US chiropractic patients aged 65 or older, Part II." *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 2000;23(1):10.
3. Blanks RHI, Schuster TL, Dobson M: "A retrospective assessment of Network care using a survey of self-reported health, wellness and quality of life." *Journal of Vertebral Subluxation Research* 1997;1(4):15.

*(WCA Vice President Dr. Christopher Kent, president of the Council on Chiropractic Practice, is a 1973 graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic. The WCA's "Chiropractic Researcher of the Year" in 1994, and recipient of that honor from the ICA in 1991, he was also named ICA "Chiropractor of the Year" in 1998. He is director of research and a co-founder of Chiropractic Leadership Alliance. With Dr. Patrick Gentempo, Jr., Dr. Kent produces a monthly audio series, "On Purpose," covering current events in science, politics and philosophy of vital interest to the practicing chiropractor. For subscription information call 800/892-6463.)*

<http://www.worldchiropracticalliance.org/tcj/2004/mar/kent.htm>

## Chiropractic care

156 J Can Chiropr Assoc 2001; 45(3)  
0008-3194/2001/156-171/\$2.00/©JCCA 2001