



Media Backgrounder Chiropractic funding in Alberta

Who will be affected by the elimination of chiropractic funding?

- This will significantly impact the most vulnerable Albertans, such as seniors, low income households and AISH recipients; economic barriers will seriously limit their access to this treatment option
- Those Albertans without private or employer-subsidized extended health care insurance
- Those Albertans who have previously sought chiropractic treatment, as this may be considered a pre-existing condition by extended health care insurance providers, leading them to deny coverage
- All Albertans, as there will now be an even greater demand for non-chiropractic care to treat back-related conditions, resulting in longer wait lists for everyone

Why should chiropractic continue to receive government funding?

- The *Consumer Report* (April 2009) ranked chiropractic services as the number one treatment for back pain and injury
- The government's average cost for chiropractic treatment, per service, is approximately 72 per cent less than the average per service cost for physicians; chiropractic treatment continues to be an extremely cost-effective health care service, particularly when compared to costs for invasive (surgical) or drug therapy alternatives [figures calculated using Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan Statistical Supplement 2007-08 statistics (AHCIPSS)]
- According to the 2007-08 AHCIPSS, public funding for chiropractic services was \$45.7 million – this accounts for less than 1 half of 1 per cent of the total Health and Wellness Budget in 2008
- Chiropractic services received the highest rating for access and second highest rating for patient satisfaction in the 2006 Health Quality Council of Alberta survey
- The nominal co-pay structure ensures shared responsibility between the patient and the government for managing health services
- Chiropractic's cost efficiency and clinical effectiveness is supported by additional numerous studies published in a wide variety of medical journals (which can be provided upon request)

How long has chiropractic been funded by the Government of Alberta?

- Since 1969

Why is the ACAC speaking out now?

- The ACAC is attempting to understand the rationale behind eliminating chiropractic funding when it contradicts what the government claims they envision for Alberta's health care system, but has received no response to repeated attempts to communicate with the government on this issue
- Albertans have sent tens of thousands of letters to government in support of chiropractic funding and the government has ignored those communications
- Removal of chiropractic funding will drive more Albertans to seek fully covered medical services for conditions that chiropractors can more appropriately manage—resulting in higher costs for less effective results
- Chiropractic is proven to be one of the most cost-effective and clinically effective treatment options for back and neck-related conditions—it should remain accessible
- Chiropractic is proven to reduce costs to the health care system
- Lack of funding is a barrier to reasonable choice of health care options for Albertans

How can Albertans express their support of chiropractic funding in Alberta?

- Albertans should call or write to their MLAs
- Contact information for Alberta's MLAs can be found at http://alberta.ca/home/mla_contacts.cfm

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Further inquiries, please contact:

Dr. Clark Mills, President, Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors
Telephone: 780.963.6159

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www.albertachiro.com