

Introduction

Background

This is a summary of why the Madrid Conference titled *Clinical Training in Chiropractic Education: Meeting the Demands of a New Era* was held, who attended, the program, the results, and why this event was and will remain significant for the profession.

The meeting was planned by three organizations – the World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC), the members of which are national associations of chiropractors in 88 countries, the Association of Chiropractic Colleges (ACC), the members of which are chiropractic institutions predominately in North America but also internationally, and the Consortium of European Chiropractic Educators (CECE), the representative body for chiropractic educational institutions in Europe. It was co-sponsored by the International Board of Chiropractors Examiners (IBCE) and hosted by the Real Centro Universitario Escorial Maria Cristina (RCU Maria Cristina) at its superb and historic campus at San Lorenzo de El Escorial near Madrid and the Spanish Chiropractic Association (Asociación Española de Quiropráctica – AEQ).

The WFC and ACC had held five previous Education Conferences – on philosophy and chiropractic education (Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA, November 2000), on chiropractic clinical education (Sao Paulo, Brazil, October 2002), on patient examination, assessment and diagnosis (Toronto, Canada, October 2004), on professional identity and curriculum (Cancun, Mexico, October 2006) and on the use of technology in education (Beijing, China, November 2008).

The Conference Planning Committee comprised Dr. Gerard Clum and Dr. Barry Lewis representing the WFC, Dr. Joe Ferguson, Dean, Life Chiropractic College West and Dr. Michael Wiles, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Northwestern Health Sciences University representing the ACC, and Dr. Ricardo Fujikawa, Head of Chiropractic Studies, RCU Maria Cristina and Dr. Martin Wangler, Director of Academic Affairs, European Academy of Chiropractic representing the CECE.

Subject and Goals of the Conference

Are graduates well prepared for independent clinical practice? Are they prepared for the evolving healthcare world – characterized by collaboration, integration, evidence-informed best practices, patient safety, accountability and a variety of practice environments and career choices? Do they know how to manage life-long learning and apply scholarship to practice? How should chiropractic educators and organizations address these challenges? Your paper and the Conference addresses these questions.

The Conference addressed the above questions which are increasingly occupying the attention of chiropractic educators, other leaders in the profession and society.

The subject matter was undergraduate and postgraduate chiropractic clinical training – including content, methods, locations, duration, assessment, faculty and clinician scholarship and current international developments.

Goals were the enhancement of clinical training at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. There was discussion of:

- Undergraduate education
- The postgraduate clinical year in Europe and elsewhere
- Postgraduate qualifications
- Postgraduate continuing professional development
- Assessment of competencies
- Curriculum and faculty development
- Interprofessional education and clinical training
- Chiropractic incident reporting and learning systems (CIRLS)
- Collaboration between chiropractic educational institutions
- The special challenges of new first undergraduate programs in many countries

As at previous conferences, the final session was devoted to reaching agreement on a set of consensus statements capturing main areas of discussion and agreement.

Attendance

The names and addresses of registrants for the Conference are given in Appendix B to these proceedings. The chiropractic educational institutions represented are given in Table 1. There were 115 delegates representing 21 undergraduate chiropractic programs and various other chiropractic educational organizations listed in Table 1 below. This meant that the majority of accredited/recognized chiropractic educational institutions world wide were represented, many by 2-5 faculty members.

Other organizations represented included the accrediting agencies for Australasia, Canada, Europe and the USA and their international agency the Council on Chiropractic Education International (CCEI); examining and licensing bodies from Europe and North America; the European Chiropractors' Union (ECU) and its academic affiliate the European Academy of Chiropractic (EAC); and major national associations from various world regions.

In summary, the right people were present to discuss current challenges, innovations and goals in clinical education, both prior to entry into practice and thereafter.

Table 1. List of Chiropractic Educational Programmes Represented

Australia

Macquarie University
Murdoch University

Canada

Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

Denmark

Nordic Institute of Chiropractic
& Clinical Biomechanics
University of Southern Denmark

Japan

Murdoch International Study Centre
Tokyo College of Chiropractic

South Africa

Durban University of Technology

Spain

Barcelona College of Chiropractic
Real Centro Universitario Escorial Maria Cristina

Switzerland

European Academy of Chiropractic
University of Zurich

United Kingdom

Anglo-European College of Chiropractic
University of Glamorgan

United States of America

Cleveland Chiropractic College
Life Chiropractic College West
Logan College of Chiropractic
New York Chiropractic College
Northwestern Health Sciences University
Palmer College of Chiropractic
Parker College of Chiropractic
Texas Chiropractic College
University of Western States

Program – Methods and Content

Methods included:

- **Lectures.** Invited presentations from experts in each subject area.
- **Presentations by those responding to a call for papers.** Many short presentations chosen from best responses to an open call for papers.
- **Discussion and debate.** Through the use of panels and allocation of time for questions there was opportunity for interaction and debate which was essential to the success of the meeting.
- **Development of consensus statements.** From the commencement of the Conference a representative panel began drafting consensus statements that were then reviewed, amended and agreed in the final session. Members of the panel were Program Directors, Dr. Martin Wangler, Director of Academic Affairs, European Academy of Chiropractic, Switzerland and Dr. Michael Wiles, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Northwestern Health Sciences University, USA; Dr. Charmaine Korporaal, Head of

Department and Clinic Director, Durban University of Technology, South Africa; Dr. Jean Moss, President, Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, Canada; and Mr. David Chapman-Smith, WFC Secretary-General.

With respect to the content of the program, see the program (page 1 of these proceedings) for details of speakers and subjects including a description of the purpose of each session. However, in summary:

- **Day 1.** The 2-hour introductory session featured a review of necessary core clinical competencies for all chiropractic students from the perspectives of accrediting agencies and educational institutions in different countries. The former perspective was given by Dr. Joe Brimhall, President, CCEI. The latter by educational leaders from Australia, Spain, the UK and the USA.

The next three sessions each dealt with one aspect of undergraduate clinical training. These aspects were methods (e.g. paper cases, virtual world cases, hospital-based observation), settings (e.g. clinical simulation, community clinics, clinical tutorials) and instilling habits of life-long learning.

- **Day 2.** The morning sessions, Session 5 and Session 6, dealt with two further aspects of undergraduate clinical training – interprofessional education and practice, and methods of assessment or examination of clinical competencies. In the afternoon Session 7 and 8 were devoted to a full discussion of the postgraduate clinical year that has been developed in Europe and South Africa and lessons learned from that.
- **Day 3.** In the morning Session 9 reviewed faculty development for clinical education and Session 10 was devoted to maintaining clinical competencies through continuing professional development (CPD) or continuing education (CE), to use the European and North American terms. In the afternoon Session 11 looked at specialty training in chiropractic and Session 12, the closing session, was devoted to development of consensus statements.

Results of the Conference and Observations

One result of the Conference was the important set of consensus statements unanimously agreed by participants in Session 12. These appear in Table 2. Key aspects of these include:

1. **Preparation for collaborative practice in mainstream healthcare.** In this era undergraduate chiropractic clinical training should prepare all students for collaborative practice within mainstream healthcare systems (Statement 2). This means adoption of interprofessional education or IPE (Statement 5), a model of evidence-based care which allows a common language with other professionals (Statement 7), and opportunities for clinical training in interprofessional community and hospital-based settings (Statement 4).

Table 2. Madrid Conference - Consensus Statements

1. **Purpose.** This meeting was convened to consider whether current clinical training in chiropractic education is meeting the demands of a new era in health care, in which all primary contact health care professionals face ongoing change and increasing challenges.

2. **Competencies for Collaborative Practice.** A central demand of this new era which the chiropractic profession must satisfy is demonstration of the clinical and professional competencies to practice in collaboration with other health care professions. This may be best accomplished within mainstream health care systems, to provide a service that is accepted as necessary and valuable by patients and society.

3. **Further Development of Competencies.** To meet this demand the profession must further develop its clinical and professional competencies, including competencies in the following domains identified by the European Academy of Chiropractic (1) – expert performance, communication, collaboration, management, community performance, scholarship and professionalism.

4. **Clinical Training Methods.** With respect to clinical training, the new era in healthcare provides opportunities for innovation. Methods of clinical training that were discussed as beneficial include:

a. Clinician-based training

b. Clinics in a variety of community and hospital-based settings, especially those having collaborative and interprofessional practice.

c. A structured postgraduate clinical year prior to independent practice as implemented in Europe and South Africa.

5. **Interprofessional Education.** With respect to preparation for practice in collaboration with other health professionals, interprofessional education (IPE) should be an important component of clinical training in all chiropractic programs. IPE occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, with and from each other.

6. **Lifelong Learning.** With respect to the changing knowledge base in health care, there is a need for all practitioners to adopt the habit of lifelong learning. Chiropractic education must foster the practice of critical reflection. It should be commenced from the beginning of the program. The habit should be reinforced in graduate and continuing professional development programs and may be enhanced through the use of portfolios.

7. **Faculty Development.** With respect to faculty development in the area of clinical training, this should occur in a structured program. An emphasis within such a program should be further developing the practice and teaching of evidence-based healthcare. This model is patient-centered and prepares graduates for interdisciplinary practice by giving them a common language with other healthcare professionals.

8. **Continuing Professional Development/Continuing Education.** With respect to effective continuing professional development (CPD), it should include a reflective process which results in changes to practice that improve patient care. There should be a systematic approach utilizing a variety of different methods and including self- and external assessments.

See the conference proceedings for detailed information on the above matters and other important areas of clinical training discussed, including assessment and specialty training.

1. Wangler M. European Academy of Chiropractic GEP Model Curriculum. 2nd Draft Document. 2008, Dec 31;66. Document available at www.ecunion.eu/default.asp?pid=210

2. **Need for improved clinical training.** Many participants wanted to state frankly in the consensus statement that there was a clear need for improved quality of clinical training in undergraduate education and prior to independent practice. There had been compelling presentations on the value of the postgraduate clinical year as adopted by several countries in Europe and in South Africa. The agreed consensus statements did not go that far, but do say that to meet the demands of the present era “the profession must further develop its clinical and professional competencies” (Statements 2 and 3).
3. **Life-long learning.** There was a strong consensus on the “need for all practitioners to adopt the habit of life-long learning” because of the rapidly changing knowledge base in healthcare. This habit, and the practice of critical reflection, must be fostered from first commencement of chiropractic training and be reinforced in CPD/CE programs (Statements 6 and 8). CPD/CE programs “should include a reflective process which results in changes to practice that improve patient care” and there should be a combination of self and external assessments to bring that about.

A second result of the Conference was demonstration of the value of the profession working together internationally on important issues of education and practice. Chiropractic education still takes place largely in private chiropractic colleges in North America, but mainly in universities in other countries. This increases the need for international conferences at which participants appreciate the benefits and disadvantages of these different educational settings. All participants left the Madrid Conference much better informed about trends, challenges and opportunities in chiropractic education.

Conclusion

At the close of the Conference Dr. Brian Nook, Dean, School of Chiropractic and Sports Sciences, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia proposed on behalf of the Consortium of Chiropractic Institutions Asia Pacific, (CCIAP) that the next biennial education conference be held at Murdoch University with the subject of *Translation Evidence into Chiropractic Education*. There was strong support for this from those present. A subsequent survey will lead to a final decision.

There were then acknowledgements and thanks for many who had contributed so much to the Conference, but particularly:

- The Spanish Chiropractic Association, sponsor of the Opening Reception.
- The International Board of Chiropractic Examiners, main sponsor of the Conference.
- RCU Maria Cristina, its Rector Father Edelmiro Mateos , its Head of Chiropractic Studies, Dr. Ricardo Fujikawa and its faculty and students, all of whom were generous hosts at the world’s most dramatic chiropractic campus – within the historic and beautiful palace and monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial.