

Dear Members and Friends:

The World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) very seldom supports an international fundraising effort by one of its member associations. For such to occur the circumstances need to be exceptional and of international importance to the interests of the profession.

Such exceptional circumstances now exist in Brazil where the Brazilian Chiropractors' Association (ABQ), representing approximately 125 members, is in a major legislative fight against the physiotherapy profession and its regulatory board (COFFITO) representing approximately 95,000 physiotherapists. COFFITO is lobbying to have chiropractic recognized by law as a specialty of physiotherapy – if successful this would obviously be unacceptable and a very dangerous precedent for other countries.

On behalf of the ABQ and its Legislative Commission (CPRQB) the WFC now appeals to you for urgent and significant financial support. I attach:

1. A report recently received from the ABQ's Legislative Commission which gives details on a legislative campaign underway, costs in recent months, and projected activities during the next year.
2. A pledge and donation form. This provides the monies to be collected by the WFC, held in trust for the Legislative Commission, and only paid out on invoices approved by the WFC Executive.
3. An advertisement placed by the PTs in the national newspaper O Globo (The Globe) last Sunday February 11 and commencing: "In Brazil chiropractic is a specialty of physiotherapy". This appears to be the first move in a new and aggressive advertising campaign.
4. An English translation of the advertisement.

Why is this an exceptional case for international support? In summary:

1. In Brazil the practice of chiropractic is not regulated by law, but the practice of physiotherapy is. PTs have the right to develop and create specialties through their national regulatory body, the Council of Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists (COFFITO)
2. Since 2001, the Brazilian Chiropractors' Association (ABQ) has campaigned for chiropractic legislation. Draft legislation has been prepared, has received first reading in the legislature or Camara of Deputies (Camara), and in December was approved by the Camara's Commission on Constitution and Justice, the last of three commissions needing to approve it before its return to the Camara for a final vote. A major effort is now required to have the law passed by the Camara and then the Senate, given strong opposition from the COFFITO.

3. This is urgent because the COFFITO, in response to the ABQ's campaign to establish the chiropractic profession in Brazil, is claiming that chiropractic is a specialty of PT. It is supporting weekend postgraduate courses that have commenced for PTs to give them a chiropractic certificate. Graduates are forming a Brazilian Physical Therapists Chiropractic Association (ABRAFIQ) to try to formalize chiropractic as a specialty of PT before separate chiropractic legislation can be passed.
4. If this succeeds in Brazil, it is likely to spread to other Latin American countries. A PT leader in Chile is already planning a chiropractic course. This will encourage PTs in other countries without chiropractic legislation (e.g. It is understood this problem may be arising in Spain, Portugal and Egypt).
5. Unfortunately the ABQ, with only 125 members, most of whom are new graduates, has few financial resources. More than that however, it suffered a major financial loss on its first national convention last September, is unable to pay the debts due there, and is poorly placed to fund the needed legislative campaign.
6. As a result ABQ members have formed a separate and autonomous Legislative Commission coordinated by an ABQ Past-President, Dr. Sira Borges. This has received funding from individual chiropractors and both of the two chiropractic schools in Brazil. With these funds it has been running a strong campaign, getting the approval of the Constitution and Justice Commission in December despite strong COFFITO opposition. It has a volunteer chiropractor, Dr. Evergisto Lopes Souto, who has moved to Brasilia, the capital, to head the ongoing campaign. The ABQ and the Legislative Commission, however, are already in debt, and urgently need international help.
7. They approached the WFC for its support for an international appeal and this was approved by the WFC Executive at its January 30 teleconference meeting.

Donation Level

How much should you give – as an individual, a WFC national association member, an associate member, other organization, other supporter? The WFC appreciates that everyone has budgetary restrictions.

After speaking to ABQ leaders, and considering the legislative campaign and related litigation mentioned in the attached report, the WFC suggests an overall first fundraising target of US\$100,000. This compares, for example, with the US\$50,000 raised for the British Chiropractic Association when it appealed for funds for its legislative campaign in the mid-1990s.

The WFC asks large member associations and associate members to consider donations in the range of US\$10,000 -15,000 spread over a 2 year period (even 3 year period if necessary, though funds are needed now). All others are asked to give generously what they can.

Thank you for your time and consideration and support. We are faced with a new challenge in Brazil. Instead of the traditional opposition of a medical lobby, seeking no recognition of chiropractic, chiropractic is faced opposition from a physical therapy lobby seeking laws that would define chiropractic as a specialty of PT – a dangerous first internationally.

The new advertising campaign shows how upset the PTs are by the chiropractors' success before the final Commission in December, and how serious and well-funded they are. Please be as generous as you can.

Best wishes

Gerry