

Ontario Chiropractic Association

2007 – 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Care in the community.



Treatment That Stands Up.

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OUR MISSION

To serve our members and the public by advancing the understanding and use of chiropractic care.

OUR VISION

That chiropractors be recognized as spinal health care experts in the health care system.



THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS

- Board of Directors approves new three-year strategic plan
- OCA launches Member and Family Assistance Program
- OCA gets a new website with a new look and improved usability
- Lend a Hand mentorship program expanded across the province
- OCA secures access to publicly funded IHF X-rays for chiropractors
- New public education programs launched
- New member information and training sessions kick off in Ottawa

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Chiropractic brings enormous value to Ontario's health care system, and no one understands this better than the patients we serve every day in clinics across the province. For patients, chiropractic care provides improved quality of life,

because it enables them to return to work and to doing the things they love.

Even as patients benefit from chiropractic care, the health care landscape in Ontario is changing – for the better. Since the Liberal government took office in the fall of 2003, it has had a stated priority to “establish a foundation of patient-focused, results-driven, integrated and sustainable health care services.” This commitment has continued into the Liberals' current term of office. To date they have established 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), with legislative accountability to ensure that Ontario moves to integrated health system delivery at the local level. As well, Family Health Teams and Community Health Centres are evolving to address health care priorities through collaborative and community-based care.

While these initiatives were spearheaded by the Liberal government, there is little doubt that shifting to integrative models is a must if Ontario's health care system is to sustain itself amid such economic factors as rising prescription costs and an ageing population.

As members of Ontario's broader health care community, chiropractors and the chiropractic profession must continually work with government decision-makers and other health care professions to demonstrate the benefits of chiropractic care, particularly as part of integrated health care delivery. The recent changes in health care represent a tremendous opportunity for the profession and for our patients. Chiropractic is well positioned to support these priorities, specifically in the areas of health care access and health and wellness promotion.

This year, the OCA underwent a strategic planning process (the first since 2003) to decide how best to advance the political and public agendas of both the chiropractic profession and the OCA within the changing health care environment. The process was bolstered by a wide-ranging membership survey, which helped us focus our priorities to best serve the needs of our members.

The new OCA Strategic Plan effectively positions chiropractic within the new health care landscape, with a focus on:

- Building increased clarity and awareness among all audiences as to what chiropractors do and how they fit within the new health system;
- Building increased credibility and profile for the profession;
- Building more comprehensive community-based strategies to encourage greater chiropractor involvement in both health care delivery (including FHTs, CHCs and LHINs) and grassroots political advocacy; and
- Building integration in our public relations and government relations activities, both province-wide and at the community level.

Our members' contributions in the community are a powerful support in achieving our goals and ensuring that chiropractic achieves its rightful place as an integral component of Ontario's health care system.

Dr. Thomas Gadsby
President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



From large undertakings to everyday tasks, the work done each day in the OCA offices aims to serve the needs of our members. With this in mind, perhaps the most important task set before us this year was administering the OCA member survey, which was conducted in February.

Thanks to the 949 DCs who took the time to respond to the survey (34.2% of total membership), our work can continue to be informed by the needs expressed by members themselves. The OCA Board of Directors uses this feedback to form strategic priorities, which are then translated into activities that our OCA staff implements. This year has seen a veritable flurry of activity in the OCA offices.

For the OCA's Membership Services department, one of this year's most significant achievements has been the negotiation of a comprehensive Member and Family Assistance Program, which provides a range of free counselling services for OCA members and their dependants. This year also saw the expansion of the Lend a Hand mentorship program across the province, and several highly successful events, including the Pathways to Practice 2007 conference and tradeshow, which surpassed attendance of previous years.

There has been considerable effort this year to build upon and enhance communications with our members and our external stakeholders, and the OCA's new website was launched with this in mind. Designed to be more user-friendly and reflect our new visual identity, the site is a valuable source of information about the benefits of chiropractic for external audiences, as well as tools and resources for members.

The OCA's public awareness programs and communications tools have always been valued by our members who are conducting outreach and awareness activities. This year we added two new ones – the *Lift Light, Shovel Right* snow shovelling program, and the *Get in the Game Without the Pain*

golf program. Each has been well received by the public and gained positive media for the profession. We also redesigned the *Plant and Rake Without the Ache* gardening program with the OCA's new visual identity, and created *Pack it Light Wear it Right – on the go!*, an expansion of the ever-popular *Pack it Light Wear it Right* backpack program with safety information and tips for adults toting briefcases, laptop bags, handbags and travel bags.

To assist members in their outreach activities, the OCA has launched a new series of free information and training sessions featuring a presentation skills seminar. These sessions give members an opportunity to network with their peers, and gain perspectives on OCA activities and the profession's work within the broader health care environment.

Also this year, we enhanced the OCA's advocacy efforts by maximizing the reach of our message through a co-ordinated public relations and government relations approach. The OCA established a relationship with the GR/PR firm Fleishman-Hillard to conduct several successful media outreach campaigns this year. We will continue to work together to build the profile of the profession in Ontario.

Finally, the PMP team has worked diligently on enhancing the software to better serve our members in their practices. New features include the ability to create and populate OCF forms within the PMP program using existing data. PMP continues to carefully monitor developments with the Health Claims for Auto Insurance system to ensure PMP users encounter minimal complications during the eventual transition. PMP is also working to develop a clinical notes feature that will considerably enhance the program.

I look forward to continuing to enhance the products and services the OCA provides to our membership in the year ahead.

Dr. Bob Haig
Executive Director

SCORECARD

Achievements in 2007 – 2008

<p>Approved and implemented the OCA's new three-year strategic plan</p>	<p>Informed by a comprehensive membership survey and environmental analysis, the OCA Board developed a new three-year strategic plan. The plan identifies four key goals and associated strategic priorities to advance the profession, build and expand professional standing and credibility, develop opportunities for chiropractic within the evolving health care system, and effectively support OCA members.</p>
<p>Continued to build public awareness of chiropractic</p>	<p>We relaunched the OCA's We've Got Your Back print advertising campaign to create chiropractic awareness with health care and extended health care audiences and the public. We also launched with great success a redesigned <i>Plant and Rake Without the Ache</i> program, and two new public education programs: <i>Get in the Game Without the Pain</i> and <i>Lift Light, Shovel Right</i>.</p>
<p>Demonstrated chiropractic's value within private and public health care systems</p>	<p>Committed to building and enhancing our relationships with key stakeholders, the OCA was active in communications and outreach to employers, plan sponsors, unions, government and other health care professionals. Targeted mailings outlined chiropractic's benefits to individuals, organizations and the health care system. The OCA also advocated for chiropractic's integration into primary health care settings by facilitating inter-professional collaboration.</p>
<p>Consolidated government and public relations activities into one strategic direction</p>	<p>The OCA continued its multi-level advocacy approach, focusing on the fall 2007 election to ensure newly elected MPPs were familiar with chiropractic and OCA's mandate. In spring 2008, the OCA Board hired a top government/public relations firm to develop and execute integrated GR/PR strategies for maximizing impact. The OCA engaged in high-level discussions and offered support for our members' grassroots political involvement.</p>
<p>Kicked off community engagement information and training sessions in Ottawa</p>	<p>In June 2008, OCA piloted its first in a series of member engagement information and training sessions in Ottawa. The event was well received and included a cocktail reception, presentations from OCA's president and our government/public relations firm, and professional presentation training for members. The sessions provide information on OCA's new strategic direction and enable members to take a more active role in community outreach and mobilization.</p>
<p>Launched OCA's new website</p>	<p>The OCA's new website launched in late 2007 and features new content and enhanced usability, ensuring easy access to chiropractic information for stakeholders and members of the public, as well as resources, events, news and tools for members in practice.</p>
<p>Reached out with Lend a Hand mentorship program</p>	<p>The OCA's mentorship program, Lend a Hand, launched across Ontario and gave valuable personal support to recent graduates and new DCs, as well as opportunities for established practitioners to give back to their profession.</p>

<p>Launched new Member and Family Assistance Program</p>	<p>OCA's newest member benefit, the Member and Family Assistance Program (MFAP), gives members and their eligible dependants free access to a range of counselling services and health and educational resources.</p>
<p>Enhanced Patient Management Program</p>	<p>PMP users saw several software enhancements this year, including a feature that lets them create and populate OCF forms from within the program. Users continued to receive a high level of service from the PMP support team, frequent and easy-to-access updates, and <i>PMP Post</i> newsletters to stay informed. The PMP team delivered a more active presence at society meetings and conferences, and introduced new PMP tutorials featuring simple "how-to" tips.</p>
<p>Supported chiropractic research</p>	<p>The OCA actively supported numerous research projects, as well as the ongoing development of clinical practice guidelines by the Canadian Chiropractic Association and the Canadian Federation of Chiropractic Regulatory Boards. OCA provided funding support for Dr. Mark Erwin, who serves as the profession's Chiropractic Research Chair at the University of Toronto.</p>
<p>Helped members build success with Business in Practice program</p>	<p>The Business in Practice program, one of many practice building tools available to OCA members, continued to expand its base, offering support and training in marketing, business and practice management.</p>

"I love the PMP program and learn more every time I come to a training session."

PMP training session attendee

Goals for 2008 – 2009

<p>Clarify chiropractic's core scope and services for key stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position the profession as the <i>spinal health care experts in the health care system</i>. This is in keeping with OCA's new vision adopted from the World Federation of Chiropractic's international identity consultation.
<p>Build and expand chiropractic's professional standing and credibility with key audiences including government decision-makers and the public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to foster good working relationships with all levels of government. • Undertake proactive media and public relations activities to enhance recognition of chiropractors as spinal health care experts within Ontario's health care system. • Cultivate strategic partnerships and chiropractic champions who can support communications initiatives and ad hoc activities such as the proposed Chiropractic Advocacy Day at Queen's Park. • In fall 2008 launch <i>Pack it Light, Wear it Right – on the go!</i> to build on the success of the OCA's popular <i>Pack it Light, Wear it Right</i> backpack program. The "– on the go!" program educates both adults and children about the risks of toting over-stuffed and incorrectly packed bags. • Maintain focus on supporting research that: evaluates or demonstrates the value of chiropractic services to patients, payers and other stakeholders; and/or investigates integrating chiropractic into the health care system through collaborative health services delivery.
<p>Create and pursue specific opportunities to increase integration within public and private health care systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop positive relationships with other primary care givers by participating in professional tradeshow, conferences and high-level meetings, and fostering opportunities for inter-professional collaboration to enhance understanding of chiropractic's role in improving patient outcomes. • Demonstrate the win-win proposition of including chiropractic in Family Health Teams, and the effectiveness of inter-professional collaboration. • Encourage dialogue with key decision makers among insurers, employers and plan sponsors. Continue to enhance communications tools for use in lunch-and-learns and presentations.
<p>Support our members efficiently and effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a more effective member engagement strategy and communications plan to support best practices and community engagement, such as the information and presentation training sessions to be held across Ontario in fall and winter 2008.
<p>Expand usage and capabilities of our practice management programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to meet the changing needs of PMP users across Ontario and beyond, and keep adapting the software to new technologies. This year, users can look forward to additional training sessions and tutorials, as well as program enhancements to better suit practice needs. PMP also hopes to engage the full PMP membership in the annual statistical reporting. • Build on the continued success of the Business in Practice program and the Lend a Hand mentorship program. • Continue delivering tools and information to help members establish new practices or enhance existing ones.

REPRESENTING ONTARIO'S CHIROPRACTORS

The Ontario Chiropractic Association (OCA) represents approximately 2,800 (81 per cent) of Ontario's chiropractors.

Established in 1929, the OCA is a voluntary professional association whose mission is to serve our members and the public by advancing the understanding and use of chiropractic care.

Governed by an elected board of directors, who are supported by committees and OCA staff, the association serves its members and the public through:

Advocating for chiropractic – The OCA works with all our stakeholders – including government decision-makers, employers, unions, insurance providers, the media and the general public – to generate awareness about the benefits of chiropractic care. We participate in pre-budget and health care consultations, prepare briefs and presentations, and demonstrate the effectiveness and value of chiropractic treatment in extended health care plans.

Building public awareness about chiropractic – Newly developed marketing and communications materials include *Chiropractic Care and You* with general information about chiropractic care, as well as two public education programs: *Get in the Game Without the Pain* with important tips to help golfers avoid injury, and *Lift Light, Shovel Right* with safety tips and information on the dangers of shovelling snow.

Supporting chiropractic research – The OCA actively supports research to advance knowledge and understanding of chiropractic and its role in improving patient outcomes. We contribute funding, and secure funding for numerous projects through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Special Chiropractic Research Fund.

Communicating about chiropractic – OCA members have access to many communications tools to support them in practice. We keep them informed of health care policy developments, industry trends and clinical advancements through regular forums including the *OCA News*, member bulletins and issues briefing.

Supporting our members in practice – OCA makes many products and services available to help OCA members build stronger practices, including our Patient Management Program (PMP) proprietary software, and our Business in Practice courses, seminars and consulting services. Members also have access to Canadian Chiropractic Protective Association liability insurance, discounted home and auto insurance through TD Meloche Monnex, and the new Member and Family Assistance Program, which provides professional, personal and family counselling services. The OCA also hosts special events for members including Pathways to Practice, our annual professional development day.

BEYOND THE CLINIC WALLS

“An empowered organization is one in which individuals have the knowledge, skill, desire, and opportunity to personally succeed in a way that leads to collective...success.”

Stephen R. Covey,
author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

There are countless examples of OCA members whose work extends beyond their clinic walls. Some volunteer their time for social causes. Others dedicate themselves to expanding chiropractic's scientific knowledge base. Still others apply their passion and caring to such pursuits as sports and fundraising.

Wherever their interests have drawn them, these DCs exemplify integrity and caring. And their work – individually and collectively – is a credit to the chiropractic profession and the community.

In the following pages you will meet just a few of the many OCA members who are making a difference.

DR. JOHN DE FINNEY SPORTS CHIROPRACTIC PIONEER

He's known as the "Running Chiropractor."



It's a moniker OCA member Dr. John De Finney of Markham has earned many times over. Not only for the many times he's crossed a finish line to claim a national running title for his age group – but also because

his passion for running, and for athletics in general, has driven him personally and professionally since his graduation from CMCC in 1976.

What's more, Dr. De Finney's pursuit of this passion has helped to advance the chiropractic profession within the sporting and sports medicine communities.

Dr. De Finney is a co-founder of the College of Canadian Chiropractic Sports Sciences (originally called the Canadian Academy of Chiropractic Sports Therapists), and was one of its first fellows. The college regulates Chiropractic Sports Specialists, who must earn their designation by completing a comprehensive residency program and exam.

How did it all start? "Back when I was a student at CMCC, I developed a fitness program, and we would test some of the students and set up a fitness program for them," he recalls. "Once I graduated, I was approached by the CCA, along with two other chiropractors to start the sports chiropractic movement.

"The College has been influential in getting chiropractic included in major athletic events, such as the Olympics," says Dr. De Finney. In fact, there were two chiropractors on the Canadian Olympic Committee's Beijing 2008

Mission Team, and many others accompanied individual teams.

Now, in addition to his own practice and his work as a mentor and lecturer, Dr. De Finney continues to be a passionate ambassador for chiropractic and sport, putting his expertise and energy to work for the community at large. He has served as race director for the Markham Festival Run, and organized a run to raise funds for the Markhaven Home for Seniors, where he has also served as Director of the Foundation Board.

Three years ago, Dr. De Finney became involved in an annual "hit and run" golf tournament in support of the Dr. Jay Foundation, which raises funds for pediatric palliative care. Not surprisingly, the event involves running.

"You hit your ball and you run to your ball," he explains. "It's kind of a novel idea. A lot of the golfers come out to watch us. The guy who won the hit and run golf tournament shot 83 and finished 18 holes in an hour and five minutes."

Dr. De Finney is also well known for his work as race director for CMCC's annual Backs in Motion Run/Walk for Chiropractic, for which he has volunteered for more than 20 years.

"Backs in Motion has raised at least \$50,000 each year," he says. "Over the years, that's more than a million dollars.

"But it's more than that. It raises the profile of the profession and shows that we're involved in promoting healthy lifestyles."



MEMBERSHIP HAS BENEFITS

Member and Family Assistance Program

In our ongoing commitment to enhance value and services for our members, the OCA recently launched **The Member and Family Assistance Program (MFAP)**. It gives OCA members and their eligible dependants free access to counselling services and health and educational resources. The program provides:

- Counselling services for a range of professional, personal and family issues or life events
- A variety of e-courses and other tools to help members take charge of their health and well-being
- A childcare and eldercare online locator service
- Consultation for legal or financial advice
- Confidential support available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year



Patient Management Program (PMP)

“Our office has expanded rapidly over the years, and PMP has been very helpful in managing our needs. PMP support staff are quick to answer our phone calls or emails and are excellent at problem solving. We are very happy that we use PMP as our management program.”

– Michael McLaughlin, DC, Blenheim, Ont.

The OCA’s **Patient Management Program (PMP)** was developed by chiropractors, for chiropractors. This practice management/practice enhancement software is available exclusively to OCA members, and offers a range of features to help them manage all of their patient information – including patient visits, submissions and reconciliations, reporting, letter writing and more. PMP is backed by support-line staff with technical expertise and real front-line experience in chiropractic offices.

PMP has supported chiropractic research projects and education at CMCC and at Toronto’s St. Michael’s and Mt. Sinai Hospitals, in some cases by providing customized software.

Recent program enhancements – PMP users are familiar with the many functions and features the program has to offer. This year we expanded these capabilities to include:

- The ability to create and populate OCF forms within PMP from existing data
- Additional user query options
- Upgraded and simplified statistical reporting
- A patient diagnosis section
- Enhanced patient privacy with a “do not contact” option

Business in Practice

“Fantastic ideas for an office just starting out, or for a well established office that needs a breath of fresh air.”

– Business in Practice seminar attendee

Available exclusively to OCA members, **Business in Practice** is a suite of courses, seminars and consulting services to help them manage and grow their practices. Developed in partnership with the Gibraltar Group, it provides expert coaching and instruction on such topics as:

- Setting up a practice
- Structuring business plans
- Generating and interpreting practice statements and statistics
- Bookkeeping, banking and financing
- Managing debt
- Creating a marketing plan
- Patient communications skills
- Planning for the future
- Managing your staff

Lend a Hand mentorship program

“I surrounded myself with a handful of very important people in my life. That’s part of what I tried to share with my mentee. For me it was an incredible part of my maturation as a chiropractor and as a person.”

– Dr. Joel Weisberg, Toronto

Following the highly successful pilot in 2006, OCA’s **Lend a Hand mentorship program** was launched this year across the province as a new member benefit.

The program is designed to encourage and assist young practitioners as they develop and grow their practices, while providing more experienced members with an opportunity to network with peers and give back to the profession.



DR. MARK ERWIN RESEARCH SCIENTIST



For all his scientific accomplishments, Dr. Mark Erwin's work in disc biology is anything but academic. It was seeing the suffering of patients with degenerative disc disease in his chiropractic clinic

that drove him to pursue the subject and investigate new treatments that could help to relieve the pain.

"Degenerative disc disease is a huge problem," says Dr. Erwin. "it can be a significant source of disability, and the effects of DDD can lead to serious neurological impairment."

Dr. Erwin graduated from CMCC in 1984, and got interested in treating musculoskeletal conditions when an injury forced him to give up competitive swimming. He went on to pursue his Ph.D. at the University of Toronto, where he studied cellular and molecular aspects of intervertebral disc biology.

Since then, Dr. Erwin's work investigating cellular and molecular biological approaches within the context of regenerative medicine strategies has earned him accolades in the research community, numerous prestigious grants, and a position as CCRF scientist in disc biology at Toronto Western Hospital, not to mention the Chiropractic Research Chair at the University of Toronto, which is jointly funded by the OCA, the CCRF and the University Health Network.

"Within Toronto Western Hospital my work is really in the middle of three big divisions – neuroscience/neurosurgery, orthopedic surgery and rheumatology. In all three of these, a large proportion of what they do is degenerative

spine conditions. All three of those major programs face the same clinical challenge; degenerative spine conditions. In many ways it is an academic meeting place."

For all his scientific study, Dr. Erwin still treats many patients. Beginning this past spring, he began seeing patients at Toronto Western's Krembil Neuroscience Centre, assisting preeminent neurosurgeon and Clinic Director Dr. Michael G. Fehlings.

"I learn a ton," says Dr. Erwin, noting that the opportunity is also helping to break new ground for chiropractic. "The support provided by Dr. Fehlings is a fabulous opportunity. I have the occasion to interview the patient, review their physical findings and diagnostic imaging and interact with Dr. Fehlings in his assessment. The point of the exercise is to help Dr. Fehlings cut down on his wait times and provide what we think are the best non-operative options for the non-surgical patients."

Dr. Erwin is also helping to educate a new generation of doctors about the field of disc biology. As well as mentoring two CMCC students, he was recently asked to teach neurosurgery residents about conservative treatments for back pain, and to teach developmental embryology at U of T's anatomy department.

In the process, he is demonstrating the value that chiropractic and MSK expertise can bring to patient care and to research.

"The most important thing we can do professionally is to identify ourselves as being knowledgeable," says Dr. Erwin. "In a clinic, if you educate patients and the public about the nature of the problem, then they'll come to you for advice. You don't have to sell them on coming to see you. I think that's where people would win. There's just no downside to that."

DR. RALPH SCIULLO INTEGRATION ADVOCATE



"It is gratifying to see just how effective collaborative care is in improving patient outcomes," says Hamilton's Dr. Ralph Sciullo of his work as chiropractic consultant at the David Braley Sport Medicine and

Rehabilitation Centre at McMaster University.

"Being involved in a sports medicine clinic as prestigious as this one is quite an honour and helps to enhance the profile of chiropractic. This environment allows other professionals to see the value of chiropractic in patient care," he says. "The collaboration is fantastic and also creates a learning environment."

Dr. Sciullo, who is a past president of the Hamilton Chiropractic Society, is well known in the Hamilton area. Not only for his work within the profession, but also for his work with the AHL Hamilton Bulldogs, and as chiropractic consultant/conditioning co-ordinator for the Hamilton Junior Bulldogs hockey organizations.

He also works part-time at the David Braley clinic as a complement to his own practice. Here he treats many high-performance athletes in an environment that allows him to collaborate with sports medicine physicians,

physiotherapists, an orthopaedic surgeon, a podiatrist and other health care practitioners. The goal is to improve patient outcomes by working together to manage care. Chiropractic, says Dr. Sciullo, adds considerable value in such an environment.

"The reception from MDs has been very positive," he says. "And athletes are demanding that sort of biomechanical approach to care in order to improve their performance."

"I think there was always a core group of athletes who utilized chiropractic care, but now the value of chiropractic is spreading from athlete to athlete by word of mouth."

Dr. Sciullo has always been a strong advocate of building inter-professional relationships, and was involved in the creation of the OCA's MD/DC toolkit to help chiropractors across the province establish relationships in the wider health care community.

"I've always valued that. In private practice I've worked hard to develop good inter-professional relationships, and outside my practice I've done my best to educate physicians on the value of chiropractic care."



OCA AND THE CHIROPRACTIC COMMUNITY

Promoting professional development

Year after year, the OCA's professional development day, **Pathways to Practice**, attracts DCs and Chiropractic Health Assistants from across Ontario with exceptional speakers, workshops, and the leading vendors serving the chiropractic profession.

This year the OCA launched a new series of information and training sessions for members, providing insights into the changing face of Ontario's health care system, and presentation training to help members conduct their community outreach activities.

Championing research

The OCA supports research that is aligned with the following five priorities as approved by the OCA Board of Directors:

1. Evaluate or demonstrate the value of chiropractic services to patients, payers and other stakeholders
2. Integrate chiropractic into the health care system through collaborative health services delivery research
3. Support the CCA/CFCRB clinical practice guidelines project
4. Support chiropractic research chairs and professorships through the Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation
5. Support the establishment of chiropractic schools in Canadian universities

In accordance with these priorities, the OCA has supported the ongoing development of clinical practice guidelines by the Canadian Chiropractic Association, through the Clinical Guidelines Development Fund.

Numerous innovative projects have also been completed, or are underway, with funding secured by the OCA through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Special Chiropractic Research Fund:

- Validation of a Decision Aid Tool for X-ray Use in Patients With Acute Low Back Pain, led by Dr. Carlo Ammendolia;
- Impact of Chiropractic Care in a Chronic Pain Population in an Addiction Recovery Program, a study by Dr. Matthew Barrigar;
- The Epidemiology and Primary Care Utilization for Occupational Neck Pain in Ontario, led by Dr. Pierre Côté;
- Development, Refinement and Validation of Clinical Predictive Rules for the Management of Acute Low Back Pain in Primary Care Practice, a study by Dr. Jill Hayden;
- Quantification of Mechanical Low Back Pain, a study by Dr. Gregory Kawchuk;
- Clinical Management of Mechanical Neck Pain: A Decision and Utilities Analysis, led by Dr. Gabrielle van der Velde.

The OCA has also helped to secure funding for several pilot projects investigating the benefits of including chiropractic in Family Health Teams and other interdisciplinary settings. Further information on these projects can be found on page 22.

Finally, the OCA has been an active supporter of the Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation, which established Chiropractic Research Chairs at universities across the country. OCA member Dr. Mark Erwin serves as the profession's research chair at the University of Toronto.

OCA member Dr. Jason Busse has recently been awarded the prestigious CCRF/CIHR Chiropractic Research Chair, a five-year award partnered by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation (CCRF).

Supporting chiropractic students

Students of the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC) receive free OCA membership, which gives them access to OCA products, courses, events and e-bulletins.

Each year the OCA honours outstanding Ontario students at chiropractic colleges, including CMCC and U.S. colleges, with Research Assistant Awards (valued at \$7,500 each) by securing funds from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Our aim is to reward academic excellence and promote chiropractic research among those who represent the future of our profession.



For third- and fourth-year CMCC students, the OCA hosts Practice Makes Perfect, an annual student conference featuring speakers chosen from among the profession's leaders, and panel discussions on topics relevant to young practitioners preparing to build a practice.

Working together with CMCC

The OCA contributes significantly to CMCC's Capital Campaign.

We also worked with the college to help develop *The Benefits of Spinal Manipulation*, a new Learning Module for the Distance Learning program. Developed with financial support from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, this online-based Adobe program offers three hours of continuing education credits.

Nine more online programs are in the planning stages to be launched over the next 12 months.

DR. SALIMA ISMAIL

COMMUNITY BUILDER



In the historic community of Manotick, nestled in the Rideau Valley, the Dickinson Day festival is celebrated each June with music, entertainment and a strawberry social. Dr. Salima Ismail and her clinic staff can

always be found there, distributing free sunscreen and bottles of water to fellow community members who've come out to enjoy the early summer sunshine.

It's one of the many ways Dr. Ismail gives back in the community where she lives and practises chiropractic.

Winner of the OCA's 2006 Community Service Award, Dr. Ismail is also president of the local Chamber of Commerce, which organizes an annual breakfast with the community's MPP and local businesswomen.

"It really gets us on the map with the MPP if we ever have an issue," she says. "We've forged a really great relationship with her that way. At a federal level with our MP we've done a great deal of work as well."

Dr. Ismail also took a leadership role in fundraising to restore her community's Royal Canadian Legion, which had been destroyed in a fire.

"Our clinic was in charge of fundraising and we helped to raise about \$185,000. That represents a lot of events that we organized," she says with a laugh, adding that the facility will be rebuilt this fall.

The work pays off in other ways as well.

"When you're out there you're meeting people face to face," says Ismail. "We get a lot of new patients through these activities – we don't solicit them, but after they've met us, when they think of chiropractic they come to us."

"When I think about marketing, I could put an ad in a newspaper, but if I could do anything, I would put in more time."

Dr. Ismail is also very active within the chiropractic community. She is President of the Eastern Ontario Chiropractic Society, a group that has been honoured by the OCA for its work in generating awareness about chiropractic and promoting dialogue and learning within the profession. The society has hosted several high-profile tradeshow, and has featured an impressive roster of guest speakers for its members. As well, members of the society have co-ordinated a community-wide chiropractic emergency service, with DCs taking on rotating on-call duties through the use of an emergency pager system.

"In my mosque as I grew up, we were volunteering all the time," says Ismail. "We've always been used to doing community service and work. What I've done is I've just extended it into the community where I live and work."

DR. JILL PLANTZ

HEALTH CARE INTEGRATION ADVOCATE



With her knowledge of chiropractic, and her recent experience in practice in the Walkerton community, Dr. Jill Plantz has worked to bring an important perspective to the table at the South

West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

Dr. Plantz, a recent graduate from CMCC, was a member of the LHIN's Primary Health Care Priority Action Team, a group that played a critical role in shaping integration priorities to meet the health care needs of the community.

Dr. Plantz believes chiropractic has an important role to play in primary health care and emergency care in Ontario. That's why she began volunteering her time, alongside her peers in other health care professions.

"The OCA had sent out a notification about working with LHINs," she says. "So I decided to get involved and we had our first meeting in February of '07."

Her work on the team brought her into contact with a range of other health care professionals and stakeholders, something that has helped her learn a great deal about the broader health care environment outside her own practice.

"It's been good for relationship building," says Dr. Plantz, noting that she has learned a great deal about other health professions in the process, including nurse practitioners and the role they can play in health care delivery.

And, she says, her role will also enable her to communicate the ways chiropractic can contribute within an integrated setting.

"I hope that my involvement in this process was able to bring a greater number of health care professionals into the primary care setting."



ADVANCING THE UNDERSTANDING AND USE OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Media relations

The OCA directs its media relations activities towards securing both public education- and issues-based media. Our staff respond to media requests, and support external relations activities and existing public education modules through media outreach.

In early 2008, the Bone and Joint Decade Task Force on Neck Pain and Its Associated Disorders synthesized all available research on neck pain and produced a comprehensive review of its causes, effects and treatments. When the study was published in the journal *Spine*, the OCA worked with the CCA, the University Health Network and our public relations firm to disseminate the findings to media across the province. As a result, the study received extensive coverage in consumer broadcast, print and Web-based media, as well as respected trade publications like *Hospital News*.

OCA also supported the CCA for the media launch of its falls prevention program called *Best Foot Forward*. The program aims to generate public awareness about the significant health problems posed to seniors by falls that are largely preventable. In preparation for launch, the OCA worked closely with the CCA and our sister provincial associations to co-ordinate media relations efforts and get the word out to Ontario seniors as well as their family members and caregivers. OCA identified spokespersons in several Ontario communities and helped to prepare them for media interviews.

Advertising

Following last year's success of our "We've Got Your Back" print and online advertising campaign, OCA relaunched it in fall 2007. It appeared in such trade publications as the *Medical Post*, *Pension and Benefits Monitor* and *Hospital News* through May, 2007. It also appeared in consumer publications including *Chatelaine*.

The campaign consists of five ads, each emphasizing chiropractic's role in improving quality of life for patients or improving organizational health for businesses. This end-benefit message targets the general public as well as chiropractic's key audiences: employers and plan sponsors, other health care professionals, insurers and unions.

Public education

This year, OCA continued to build on the success of our public education programs by adding two new ones supported by media relations activities:

- *Lift Light, Shovel Right* provides practical safety tips to help Ontarians avoid injury when digging out after a heavy snowfall;
- *Get in the Game Without the Pain* is designed to help Ontario golfers stay healthy and active on the green all season long.

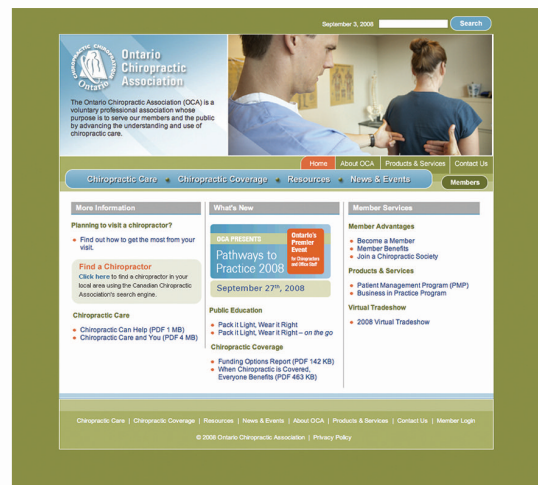
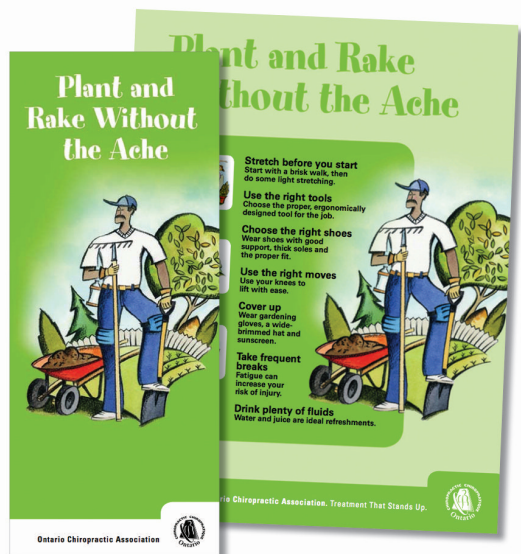
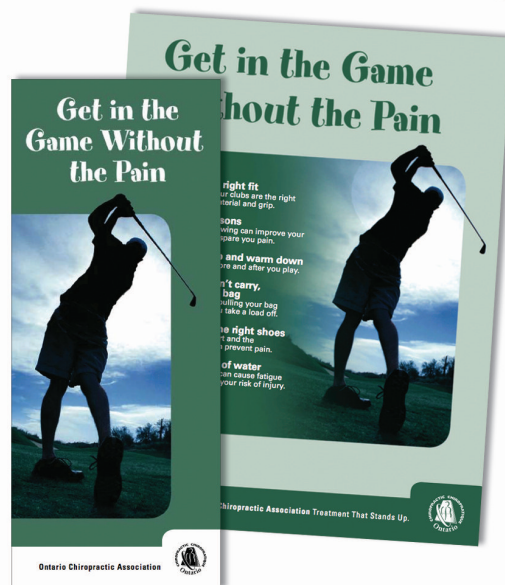
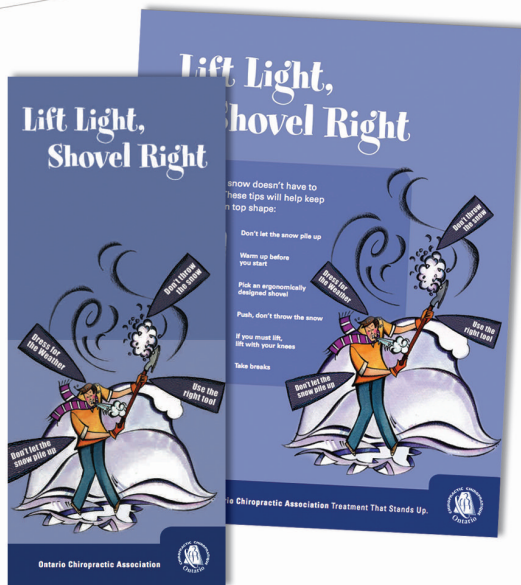
Each program features a full-colour brochure and a poster for display in clinic reception areas.

The OCA's popular *Plant and Rake Without the Ache* gardening program was relaunched this year with a new look that reflects the association's new visual identity.

Online presence

This year the OCA launched its redesigned website, reflecting the look and feel of our new visual identity.

The new site provides improved usability and easy access to practice tools and resources for members, and valuable information about the benefits of chiropractic care to external stakeholders including the members of the public.



DR. KEITH CONCISOM COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER



Basketball, volleyball, track and field, wrestling, field hockey, ice hockey...

Dr. Keith Concisom has been actively involved as a coach and trainer across the sporting spectrum, working with varsity

teams, high school and even elementary school athletes.

Indeed, it would be hard to find a young athlete or coach in the Sarnia-Lambton area who hasn't heard of Dr. Concisom, particularly at his alma mater, St. Patrick's High School.

"Really, it came about because I was inundated by patients and local teams calling and asking, 'Can you be on our team? Can you help with our team?'" he says.

A graduate of the National College of Chiropractic (Class of '98), Dr. Concisom began volunteer coaching years earlier while working on his physical education degree at the University of Western Ontario. He started as head coach of the university's women's field hockey team.

Some 15 years later, he shows no signs of slowing down. In fact he's now involved in training coaches for the Ontario Minor Hockey Association through the Hockey Trainers Certification Program.

"I thought my time could be best spent helping the trainers," he says. "I do help a lot with the conditioning. So many kids were coming in with injuries, and I helped them get back in the game. That sparked the interest of people at the OMHA, because I've taken a lot of courses on strength training."

In addition to his expertise in strength training, Dr. Concisom's coaching experience led him to help establish a nutrition component to the curriculum of the Hockey Trainers Certification Program.

"Some of these kids have aspirations of going to the next level, even to the NHL. Helping them meant looking at what they were doing and who they were emulating. It meant getting back to basics, back to the food groups. Back to what active kids should be eating to fuel their bodies...like fruit, and vegetables, and water."

Dr. Concisom is a past winner of the OCA's Community Service Award. He says his volunteer work has benefited him, and his practice, in a number of ways. For instance, the additional training for his coaching work – on conditioning, core strengthening and stability, and post-rehabilitation training – has helped him to better serve his chiropractic patients.

Principally, though, he values the opportunity to get out in the community and give back.

"I was very involved in different sports when I was growing up," says Concisom, "and all along there were people who helped me.

"So every time I drag myself to a team practice at five o'clock in the morning, I just remember that somebody did it for me. I know those kids are going to be in the gym, enthusiastic and ready to go. I feed off that enthusiasm. It keeps me feeling young.

"That's the secret," says Concisom. "You get back more than you could ever, ever imagine."

DR. IGOR STEIMAN RELATIONSHIP BUILDER



Inter-professional collaboration has always made intuitive sense to Dr. Igor Steiman.

"I've been involved in inter-collaborative care throughout my career, before I even knew that's what it's

called," he says. "I've just always practised in interdisciplinary settings."

It is perhaps this intuitive belief in the value of working together, for patients and for practitioners, that has made Dr. Steiman such a skilful relationship builder.

Dr. Steiman, who was last year's recipient of the OCA's Professional Services Award for Public Relations, has helped to open new doors for chiropractic in Ontario. In addition to his role as Coordinator of Clinical Sciences with CMCC's graduate studies program, he has enhanced understanding of the benefits of chiropractic care through his work with the WCB and WSIB.

Perhaps most significantly, Dr. Steiman played a role in negotiating the first academic affiliation agreement between CMCC and St. Michael's teaching hospital in Toronto. The project was a great success, which he credits to the preparatory work done by principal investigator, Dr. Deborah Kopansky-Giles.

"It started in 2004," Dr. Steiman says, "and the project was not as much about the clinical outcomes as it was about integrating chiropractic into a teaching hospital."

Now seconded from CMCC and working out of St. Michael's, he says the project is constantly evolving and is being very well received.

"It was wonderful to see all the acceptance that we got from everyone in the hospital community," he says. "We were being asked to get involved in education here, particularly with medical students. There was a lot of thirst for information about MSK."

Communications, says Dr. Steiman, is key to integrating successfully into a collaborative interdisciplinary environment. And it's key to building relationships.

"There's got to be some expertise in MSK, and (at St. Mike's) they're learning that we are part of their team. There should be a much healthier relationship between medicine and chiropractic. We have the potential, and chiropractic has a unique focus.

"We can't be all things to all people," says Dr. Steiman, "and we shouldn't be afraid to collaborate with other people."



CHIROPRACTIC: PART OF ONTARIO'S PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TEAM

Chiropractors are valued within the health care community as spinal health care experts and, more and more, their expertise is being applied within integrated and collaborative care settings. The shift to interdisciplinary teams in the delivery of primary care recognizes that the many complex needs of patients are beyond the expertise of any one health profession, and that patient-centred care requires inter-professional collaborative care.¹

The OCA applauds the Ontario government's ongoing progress with Family Health Teams. As these teams evolve, the government continues to explore how chiropractic and other health care services are to be included.



¹ Primary Health Care Transition Fund, Collaborative Care, March 2007.

www.healthcanada.gc.ca/phctf
Accessed August 27, 2007.

Three recently concluded pilot projects, funded by the Primary Health Care Transition Fund, have already demonstrated the value of integrating chiropractors into three different primary care settings:

1. **Integrating Chiropractic Into a Hospital-based Primary Care Setting: Evaluation of Clinical Outcomes**, led by OCA members Deborah Kopansky-Giles, DC (Principal Investigator); Igor Steiman, DC; Howard Vernon, DC;

2. **Chiropractic Primary Care Demonstration Projects: Implementing a Model of Interdisciplinary Collaborative Practice**, led by OCA member Silvano Mior, DC; and Jan Barnsley, PhD; with Co-Investigators Heather Boon, PhD; Pierre Côté, DC, PhD; Brian Gamble, MD; Robert Haig, DC; and Project Manager Janet Hayes, RN;
3. **Integrated Collaboration in Existing Community Health Centres: Adding a Chiropractor to the Team**, led by OCA members Jeff Balon, DC, MD; Dirk Keenan, DC; Peter Aker, DC, MSc, and Michael Birmingham, PhD; Pran Manga, PhD; with MJ Garner, MSc; David Moher, PhD, and Carlington Community and Health Services.

In all of these projects:

- The working relationships established among the chiropractors, physicians, and others on the health care team were positive and resulted in improved patient care.
- There were consistently high patient and provider satisfaction scores.
- There were positive clinical results of reduced pain and disability.

As well, fewer visits to the physician and reduced medication use (both frequency and dosage) were observed among patients treated by a chiropractor in the one study where these were measured.

These recent studies in Ontario are just part of the growing evidence that strongly supports the integration of chiropractic services within the Family Health Team and Community Health Centre settings.

ADVOCACY

One of the OCA's key roles is to represent and promote the interests of our members to employers, government decision makers, unions and media representatives. Advocacy efforts include high-level activities – such as promoting chiropractic's role within Ontario's health care system – and acting on behalf of individual OCA members, which includes intervening to educate a specific insurance adjuster.

OCA negotiates access to IHF X-rays

As an unintended consequence of delisting, chiropractors' ability to access X-rays in public facilities has been significantly inhibited since December 2004. This has impacted access to both public hospitals and private radiology labs (known as Independent Health Facilities).

Since then, the OCA has been working with the government to alleviate the X-ray situation. Recently these efforts have resulted in a designation under the Independent Health Facilities Act. Now when radiographs are ordered by a chiropractor in an Independent Health Facility, the technical portion of the fee is paid by the Province. It's a significant step forward, and on behalf of chiropractors and their patients, the OCA is continuing its dialogue with the government to build on it.

Outreach to extended health care audiences

For the past two years the OCA has been actively reaching out to Extended Health Care stakeholders, including employers, unions, insurance companies and benefits consultants. We have sent packages and followed up with more than 2,400 key stakeholders responsible for managing or influencing extended health care plans.

These outreach activities have resulted in employee lunch-and-learn sessions, and high-level discussions with employment sectors ranging from retail and service to industrial and mining.

The OCA's EHC outreach plays an important role in ensuring chiropractic's place within Ontario's health care system, and it will continue to be part of our long-term strategy.

Riding Designate Strategy

With the OCA's new combined government/public relations strategy comes the need for increased community-level advocacy. To this end, the OCA continues to work to identify, train and support Riding Designates in communities around Ontario. Our goal is to build a groundswell of support for chiropractic care by raising the profile of chiropractic at the riding level. The more active chiropractors there are in the communities, the more likely it is that this goal can be achieved.

WSIB

The OCA's ongoing positive relationship with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board has had excellent results. This year chiropractors have been added to multidisciplinary assessment teams within the WSIB's Regional Evaluation Centres. This has taken many years of persistent OCA activity.

Another major milestone announced in February is a fee increase of 23 per cent to \$25 for WSIB patients. We look forward to the release of the chronic low-back pain Program of Care, which will include spinal manipulation as a key modality of care.

The OCA has also participated in the WSIB Stakeholder Roundtable to identify and address administrative, non-clinical issues.

Auto insurance

A five-year review of auto insurance is currently underway, and the OCA has made a submission to the Financial Services Commission of Ontario. We are advocating for auto policy enhancements to reduce the administrative burden on practitioners and improve access to services for claimants.

In addition, the OCA takes a lead position with the Coalition of Health Professions on Auto Insurance Reform, on which FSCO relies for practitioner input.

OCA is an active member of the Health Claims for Auto Insurance (HCAI) working group, and when our members highlighted serious issues with the system, we brought these concerns to the Superintendent of FSCO. As a result, HCAI has been suspended until further notice.

OCA STRUCTURE

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