

# Ontario Chiropractic Association

## Guidelines for Promoting Chiropractic

We frequently receive calls at the OCA office enquiring as to guidelines around promoting chiropractic via public or trade shows and mall displays.



The CCO Advertising Standard of Practice (S-003) addresses the rules related to public promotion. Below are the sections of standard S-003 that directly apply to public promotion and we encourage members keep this standard in mind, as well as the OCA's list of DO's and DON'T's when communicating with the public outside of your office.

For more information on CCO standards of practice, guidelines, and policies visit their website at [www.cco.on.ca](http://www.cco.on.ca), or call them at 416-922-6355.

## CCO Advertising - Standard of Practice S-003

Advertising Committee

Approved by Council: September 7, 1996

Amended and Approved by Council: September 21, 2002 and June 22, 2007

**Note: Council minutes to be ratified on September 11, 2007**

Note to Readers: In the event of any inconsistency between this document and the legislation that affects chiropractic practice, the legislation governs.

### Intent

1. To provide members with advertising guidelines to ensure all advertisements serve the public and enhance the profession.
2. To educate the public on what is available for their chiropractic health care.
3. To ensure, as much as possible, that the public has the information to make rational choices for their care.
4. To assist the public in obtaining the services of members of their choice.
5. To maintain a professional image.

## OCA's List of Public Display DO and DON'T'S

- DO** promote the chiropractic profession, as a whole, not your individual practice or service
- DO** have handouts and give-away materials from reputable sources
- BE** friendly and approachable
- DO** have a full list of area, society, or group members to hand out, or refer the public to the OCA's "Find a Chiropractor" feature at [www.chiropractic.on.ca](http://www.chiropractic.on.ca), or our toll free referral number 1-877-327-2273
- DO** demonstrate using models and props
- DO** behave professionally
- DO** ensure that all materials you intend to distribute to the public are approved by the CCO advertising committee.



- DON'T** hand out your own business cards or book any appointments with potential patients
- DON'T** pre-screen patients or perform spinal screenings
- DON'T** provide treatment to anyone in a mall or trade show setting
- DON'T** offer free consultations as a result of someone coming to the booth
- DON'T** make an on-the-spot diagnosis
- DON'T** perform any testing or examination procedures at a mall display (this includes weigh scales, thermography scanning, SAM machines, etc.)

If you have questions about communicating with the public, contact Jennifer Paige, Manager, Communications & Marketing at 905-629-8211 or toll-free at 1-877-327-2273 ext. 25 or at [jpaige@chiropractic.on.ca](mailto:jpaige@chiropractic.on.ca).

## OCA guidelines for promoting chiropractic

### Description of Standard

1. An advertisement must be:
    - a) accurate, factual and contain information that is verifiable;
    - b) readily comprehensible by the persons to whom it is directed.
  2. An advertisement may:
    - a) name a specific service, technique and/or product but cannot claim superiority or endorse the exclusive use of such services, techniques or products. References to specific services, techniques, technologies, devices or procedures must comply with standard of practice (S-010: Techniques, Technologies, Devices or Procedures);
    - b) make reference to the member being a specialist, provided the member is recognized pursuant to CCO's policy as a specialist, and the specialty is disclosed. Refer to Policy P-029: Chiropractic Specialties, for the list of specialties currently recognized by CCO;
    - c) make reference to the member being affiliated with any professional association, society or body, other than CCO, only on curriculum vitae, business stationery and sponsored public displays;
    - d) allow an individual or organization to endorse a member:
      - i) provided the individual or organization proposing the endorsement has sufficient expertise, according to CCO, relevant to the subject matter being endorsed; and
      - ii) provided the member has been appropriately assessed as providing the subject matter being endorsed;
    - e) offer an initial complimentary consultation<sup>1</sup>.
  3. Any advertisement with respect to a member's practice must not contain:
    - a) anything false or misleading;
    - b) a guaranteed success of care;
    - c) any comparison to another member's or other health care provider's practice, qualifications or expertise;
    - d) any expressed or implied endorsement/recommendation for the exclusive use of a product or brand of equipment used to provide services;
    - e) testimonials that refer to particular member/office<sup>2</sup>.
    - f) any reference to free or discounted diagnostic or treatment services;
    - g) material that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.
  4. Public presentations/displays<sup>3</sup> are permissible provided:
    - member(s) adhere(s) to CCO's regulations, and stan-
- dards of practice (e.g., consent, record keeping);
  - professional conduct is maintained at all times;
  - material distributed complies with the Advertising standard<sup>4</sup>;
  - assessment(s) performed comply with CCO's Public Display Protocol and are for educational purposes;
  - no controlled act of diagnosis and/or adjustments are performed;
  - no coercion/pressure tactics are used<sup>5</sup>.
5.
    - a) Banner advertising on the Internet must comply with CCO's advertising standard of practice.
    - b) Any advertising on the member's web site must
    - c) comply with the advertising standard of practice.
    - d) Information on a member's web site must comply with all other CCO standards of practice.
  6. A member must not:
    - a) advertise or permit advertising with respect to his/her practice in contravention of the regulations or standards of practice; and
    - b) contact or communicate with or allow any person to contact or communicate with potential patients via telemarketing/electronic methods.

### Legislative Context

Regulation pursuant to the Chiropractic Act, 1991.

### Current Status

Proposed regulation submitted to the Professional Relations Branch but not processed internally. There may be some amendments following processing.

<sup>1</sup> A consultation is a meeting to discuss how chiropractic may benefit the patient and plan for future care. A consultation does not include examination procedures, diagnostic tests (e.g., x-rays) or treatment services.

<sup>2</sup> Testimonials that refer to the benefits of chiropractic and not to a particular member/clinic are permissible provided they are not false or misleading. Members must comply with the current privacy legislation and obtain the patient's consent prior to using his/her testimonial.

<sup>3</sup> "Displays" include presentations of printed or other visual material to members of the public, in a place normally frequented by the public, by a person or persons who are physically present when such material is distributed or presented.

<sup>4</sup> It is strongly recommended that material to be distributed be pre-approved by the Advertising Committee.

<sup>5</sup> Voluntary appointments are permitted – i.e., potential patients ask for the member's business card or requests an appointment.

Ontario Chiropractic Association. **Treatment that stands up.**

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