

Completed Projects

To participate in today's challenging healthcare environment, ongoing research is necessary to demonstrate the effectiveness, safety and cost efficiency of chiropractic and alternative healthcare. Therefore, the NCMIC Foundation supports research projects that will have a direct impact on the chiropractic profession.



PROJECT TITLE

Dartmouth College Medicare Demonstration Project. The Demonstration of Expanded Coverage of Chiropractic Services under Medicare

North Carolina State Employers Health Plan, Comparative Provider Study

Chiropractic 2025: Divergent Futures

PURPOSE

"The Demonstration Project" was established to assess the direct and indirect costs associated with expanded coverage of chiropractic services under Medicare at demonstration sites with the intent to use those findings to model the expansion of chiropractic nationally. The findings from The Demonstration Project estimated that the national expansion of chiropractic care services would cost Medicare between \$582 million and \$1.15 billion annually. But because of the variation in costs found across the demonstration areas, concerns were raised that some of the demonstration counties might not have been representative of the nation as a whole and might have unduly and negatively influenced the project results.

This retrospective close-claim analysis of the State Employers Health Plan in North Carolina, covering 664,000 state employees, dependents and retirees from 2000–2009, has been published in *JMPT*, May 2016 Vol. 4. Utilization and costs of care patterns for low back pain, neck pain and headache comparing medical care, chiropractic care and physical therapy care vary, but the general trend is chiropractic care is less expensive.

This study conducted by the Institute for Alternative Futures focused on working with more than 60 leading and innovative chiropractic practitioners, educators and researchers, as well as other experts to develop four scenarios regarding the future of chiropractic in 2025. The goal for the study was to provide clinicians, education institutions, accrediting agencies, licensing boards, professional associations, researchers and others a preview of expectable, challenging and visionary futures for chiropractic in the U.S. so that they can use these to test their positions in their future-oriented strategies. The formal report, as well as slides for use in a strategy workshop, can be found on the Institute for Alternative Future's website at www.altfutures.org/chiropracticfutures.

PROJECT TITLE

Changes in Vertebral Artery Blood Flow Following Various Head Positions and Cervical Spine Manipulations

The Bone and Joint Decade—Neck Pain Task Force Project

Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Professions or Modalities? Policy Implications for Coverage, Licensure, Scope of Practice, Institutional Privileges and Research

Update of Consensus Project on “Best Practices” for Chiropractic Care of Children

PURPOSE

This study investigated the cerebrovascular hemodynamic response of cervical spine positions including rotation and cervical spine manipulation in vivo using MRI technology on the vertebral artery. No significant changes in blood flow or velocity in the vertebral arteries of healthy young male adults after various head positions and cervical spine manipulations were found.

Under the World Health Organization, this project has provided extensive evidence to inform clinical practice for management of neck pain and has noted where more research is needed. Completed in 2008, the results were published in three peer-reviewed journals, *Spine*, *European Spine Journal* and *JMPT*.

- A Best Evidence Synthesis on Neck Pain: Findings from the Bone and Joint Decade 2000–2010 Task Force on Neck Pain and its Associated Disorders
- Scott Haldeman, Linda J. Carroll, J. David Cassidy and the Scientific Secretariat, Bone and Joint Decade. Published in *Spine* (Volume 33, Number 4S, a 220-page Supplement to February 15, 2008 *Spine*)

Undoubtedly, the issue of cerebrovascular accidents has been one in which the media, rather than the scientific community, has created significant concern. The results from this project, clearly demonstrated in the Risk of Vertebrobasilar Stroke and Chiropractic Care: Results of a Population-Based Case-Control and Case-Crossover Study, (J. David Cassidy et. al.), estimated the association between chiropractic visits, primary care physician visits and vertebrobasilar artery (VBA) stroke. The authors concluded that “... increased risks for VBA stroke associated with chiropractic ... is likely due to patients with headache and neck pain from VBA dissection seeking care before their stroke. We found no evidence to excess risk of VA stroke associated chiropractic care compared to primary care.”

The purpose of this project was to lay out the policy implications of politically defining complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) professions by their treatment modalities rather than by their full professional scope. Even when CAM disciplines are defined by legal statutes as broad-based professions, this designation is not honored by such codes as the policies of insurance coverage.

Although the two groups of stakeholders approached the topic quite differently—as individual practitioners versus representatives of organizations—both groups said many similar things. Both wanted to improve care to patients. Both also concluded that engaging employers and presenting a business case were important, that CAM faced a significant educational challenge—with patients, other providers and policymakers—and that CAM professions had to work together to improve care. A number of obstructive laws and regulations were also identified. This study’s results serve as a valuable reference to aid in future policymaking. Results have been released as a RAND Publication. http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1258.html

The purpose of this project was to update the 2009 “Best Practices” document and publish it in an open-access, peer-reviewed journal so that it will be readily accessible to the public and to the profession. “Best Practices” documents lay out the diagnostic and management procedures that combine the best scientific evidence and consensus of experienced practitioners to represent the most beneficial approach to patient care. The results of the consensus panel have been published in *JMPT* 2016: 39:158-168.

NCMIC Foundation Funded Projects Noted in Peer-Reviewed Journals

For the comprehensive list of projects funded by the NCMIC Foundation that are published in peer-reviewed journals and other publications, go to www.ncmicfoundation.org/NCMIC_FoundationPublications.pdf