Editorial

Integrity and chiropractic

Abstract In an ideal world, integrity is part of all that we do and is not something that we merely speak of when it is convenient. This editorial offers some thoughts for reflection and consideration on how we work, act, and think.

© 2007 National University of Health Sciences.

Introduction

Recently, I reviewed the oaths that are administered by chiropractic educational institutions worldwide. Upon reflection, I thought about how the principles of our oaths might be included in our daily practice. Oaths are important to recite at commencement ceremonies. However, if these principles were applied to day-to-day activities, what might we say about how we currently practice? This editorial offers some thoughts on this topic.

Practicing with integrity

In an ideal world, as a professional and a health care provider, we act appropriately with our patients, staff, and other health care professionals at all times. Our patients are of supreme importance to all that we do; thus, we maintain their confidence and continue to earn their respect. We provide what is best for our patients, even if this means that we must refer them to another professional so that they can receive help elsewhere or in addition to our care. We strive to serve humanity and to help those who are sick or suffering so that they may obtain the best health possible. We provide meticulous care and deliver our chiropractic services regardless of race, color, or creed.

We take accurate chart notes and report patient findings as they are found, not as we would like them

to be in order to justify a billing code or fit into a limited protocol. We provide the finest possible treatment methods because they best suit our patients' needs instead of conforming to a technique system, practice management strategy, or dogma. The number of treatments we provide is based upon the specific patient's needs and how he or she is responding, not on financial income or a value predetermined by a marketing or practice management company.

We are honest and fair and appropriately bill for our excellent chiropractic services. We strive to keep costs reasonable so that our patients and third-party payers can continue to afford access to our care. In our practices, we strive to be known for the most cost-efficient, evidence-based, and timely health care services that are available, both locally and nationally.

We advertise in a truthful and professional manner about what our services can and cannot do, avoiding promises that we cannot keep. When discussing treatment options, giving health care advice, and providing informed consent to our patients, we are honest and forthright. We provide our patients with the most current and accurate scientific information available. We can do this because we have sought out this information; thus, we know how and what to communicate with our patients.

We show respect to other health care professionals, communicating clearly and referring to other providers, including other doctors of chiropractic, when appropriate. When we know that one of our own

breaks the law or acts inappropriately, we do not turn a blind eye; instead, we report or handle the incident in an appropriate manner. We are known for doing the right action in the right manner, even if at times our peers may think otherwise.

We continue to learn and to improve our skills. We are enthusiastic about health care improvements and discovering new information. We keep our knowledge current, staying abreast of the body of knowledge in the science, art, and philosophy of the chiropractic profession by reading journals and attending scientific and scholarly conferences. We participate in professional and service organizations on a local and national level, generously giving back to the profession with our time, effort, and funding so that the future of the profession may continue to thrive.

We live as an example for others to follow. We are outstanding citizens in our community and live in a healthy and inspiring manner. People know what we stand for simply by watching our actions. We look back upon the path that we have made and see the multitude of lives that we have touched over the years. We have made a positive impact to all those around us. We are proud that we have acted with integrity in the chiropractic profession and in our communities.

With each word that we speak and with each action that we take, we demonstrate the choices we have made. Each of us has the power to choose to act and live with integrity.

Claire Johnson
MSEd, DC, DACBSP