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News item

American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians President's message for 2010

There is an old proverb that notes, “May you live in interesting times.” We certainly live in interesting times; and we are facing interesting, and sometimes fearful, conditions. There are avenues to manage these times and conditions. We need only to think outside the box instead of being imprisoned by it.

The President’s message from William Moreau, DC, DACBSP, 1 year ago echoed the seriousness of the State of the Union by President Obama. Challenging times are still upon us. Our daily news is filled with the national home foreclosure rate, climbing unemployment rate, and the status of our tax dollars in the corporate bailout and more recent stimulus plan. The health care plan debate is the first story of the nightly news reports. I hear stories of practices downsizing by reducing office square footage, employees, and rehabilitation areas. Spouses have returned to work to make up the difference in net income loss. Impacts such as these are difficult and stressful, but they often bring a new set of solutions. Many doctors are thinking outside the box to find new solutions to business development and clinical skill sets.

Many chiropractic students and recent graduates today are pursuing additional certifications, licenses, and skills. Many chiropractic colleges and universities offer acupuncture and oriental medicine (often as a dual program). Some colleges are now affiliated with nurse practitioner programs and accept the educational curriculum of chiropractic. Still other students are pursuing a Physician’s Assistant certification. Other areas of markedly rising interest include strength and conditioning. Many doctors have obtained their Certification as a Strength and Conditioning Specialist through the National Strength and Conditioning

Association. A small number of doctors have challenged the Certified Athletic Trainer examination and completed the 1500 hours of practical experience to have an added certification. What do all of these added qualifications have in common? These are valid demonstrations of added clinical knowledge; and they are tools that can be used to access new environments, settings, and patients. The new doctors of chiropractic have recognized that they must have more to offer society and their patients to be competitive today, and they are seeking it. We are witnessing the continuing evolution of chiropractic.

Doctors who are in full-time practice often state, “We don’t have the time the new doctors have to participate in these programs.” This is often the case for doctors who are 5 to 15 years in private practice. There are a number of specialties and certifications that the practicing doctor can still access and complete. These subspecialties include chiropractic sports medicine and chiropractic orthopedics, to name a few. Some colleges and universities now offer part of the program from a distance-learning platform, which makes these rigorous programs more manageable for working doctors. Once again, the added qualifications enhance the ability of the doctor to provide a higher level of care and to have legitimacy in more aggressive marketing endeavors. Specialties in these areas have an inherent improvement in musculoskeletal diagnostic skills. Enhanced diagnostic skills are critical to enhance, and truly serve the role as, a portal of entry status. A justified musculoskeletal portal of entry status improves patient access and good patient outcomes by appropriate patient selection for conservative care or for referral to an indicated specialist. A

portal of entry doctor will serve as a gatekeeper by definition and will also serve as an important member of the health care team.

Chiropractic sports medicine is an avenue to legitimacy as viewed by the public at large, and it is concurrently an avenue to new business. We live in a sports-focused society. Advanced chiropractic sports medicine certification can, and does, provide knowledge and skills that can be implemented in practice and in marketing efforts to schools, teams, clubs, and sports organizations. As you may already know, the Diplomate of the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians (DACBSP) has received external certification from the National Commission of Certifying Agencies. The National Commission of Certifying Agencies found that the ACBSP met the standards with the DACBSP certification to achieve this recognition. The process to obtain this included reviews of our examination processes, policies and procedures, appeals processes, continuing education, ethics, and assurance that no other organization has administrative or financial control over the ACBSP. This is a major step of which the ACBSP is proud. This external certification should be used by our certificants as well during their meetings to develop their businesses. Multidisciplinary groups have existed previously, but there is a new wave of increasing numbers of multidisciplinary practices. Added qualifications and certifications are critical in the selection of doctors for these groups.

Although we are seeing difficulty in many practices, we are also at a time of unprecedented chiropractic achievement. Michael Reed, DC, DACBSP, is the

Director of Sports Medicine for the United States Olympic Committee. William Moreau, DC, DACBSP, is the Director of the Clinics of all 3 Olympic Training Centers. The Professional Football Chiropractic Society has members who serve all but one professional football teams. The greater the height of achievement of these doctors, the greater we can leverage their achievement to penetrate new markets and inform administrators, allied physicians, and coaches of the positions that doctors of chiropractic now hold.

As one can see, there are many options and avenues to address the changing environment. The environment will always change as life always changes. The information technology industry has a simple expression—"Adapt or perish." It is folly to think that we are immune to change in our thought process, knowledge, and skills. How we market these factors will change, too. The common, lay definition of *insanity* (most often referenced in business) is one keeps performing the same action again and again but expects a different outcome. If the conditions of your environment have changed, you must change as well. We cannot keep doing the same things we did in the past but expect a better outcome, even if the actions worked in the past. The previous actions may be obsolete now. There are ethical, honest avenues to further develop one's clinical skills and business. Consider chiropractic sports medicine as an option to further your career (www.acbsp.com).

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