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FEDERATION OF STRAIGHT CHIROPRACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Position Paper on Diagnosis and Referral

In order to maintain a clear and unique identity for straight chiropractic and eliminate or reduce the public's confusion as to the role of a chiropractor in health care it is critical to establish a common understanding and agreement about the extent of a doctor of chiropractic's responsibility to diagnose and refer.

It is the position of the Federation of Straight Chiropractors and Organizations (FSCO) that:

- 1) While training and statute may allow the chiropractor broad diagnostic scope, chiropractors may also elect to focus their practice on the location, analysis and correction of vertebral subluxations. This inherently includes determining the safety and appropriateness of chiropractic care. Analysis is the term used to describe the process of assessing the presence of vertebral subluxations and arriving at an impression of its location, character, type and chronicity. Chiropractic analysis does not differentiate between numerous conditions or single out one condition from another, which is the objective of diagnosis.
- 2) If in the course of providing care, a chiropractor encounters findings that are outside his or her scope of practice, the chiropractor has a responsibility to notify the patient of those findings and make the proper documentation. The patient should also be advised that it is not the responsibility of the chiropractor to offer advice, diagnosis, prognosis, or treatment for those findings, and that, if the patient chooses, he or she may consult with another type of provider. It should be noted that the decision to see another type of provider does not conflict with the patient continuing to receive chiropractic care.
- 3) There exists a wide variety of health care practitioners, systems of health care and cultural distinctions that affect how the public utilizes health care services. Every practitioner should be sensitive to this wide variety of cultural and individual practices. In light of this, the FSCO respects the patient's right to choose.

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