

Media

Lauren Kennedy
201-641-1911 (14)
lkennedy@cpronline.com



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Workers' Compensation Update: Chiropractic Care More Valuable and Cost-Efficient For Low Back Pain vs. Physician Care, Physical Therapy

CARMICHAEL, Calif. – June 2, 2011 – A recent study conducted by medical and healthcare professionals outside the chiropractic profession, "[Health Maintenance Care in Work-Related Low Back Pain and Its Association with Disability Recurrence](#)," (*Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, April 2011, Vol. 53 Is. 4, p: 396-404) concludes chiropractic care to be more effective for common, work-related, low back pain (LBP), when compared to treatment by a physical therapist or physician. Overall, chiropractic patients illustrated lower medical expenses, fewer disability recurrences and shorter initial periods of disability.

Researchers compared disability episodes across types of healthcare providers who treat claimants with new episodes of work-related LBP. After an analysis of 894 workers' compensation cases, it was concluded that the preventive healthcare, predominantly and explicitly recommended by chiropractic doctors, is associated with lower disability recurrences. In this study, a recurrent disability is defined as the resumption of at least 15 consecutive days of temporary total disability payments following the health maintenance stage -- the period following a patient's recovery and restoration of optimal health.

"A chiropractor provides an effective approach to maintain health, a key component in preventing episode recurrence," says Gerard Clum, D.C. and spokesperson for the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress. "The clear trend revealed in this study shows chiropractic care resulting in the best outcomes, and the mechanism being used deserves the attention of both the consumer and healthcare professional."

Ten percent of patients experienced recurrent disability due to LBP between initial disabilities and the subsequent return-to-work or healthcare phase. After controlling demographic and severity factors, when compared to recipients cared for mostly by physicians and/or physical therapists, those treated mostly by chiropractors showed consistently better outcomes, less use of opioids, and had fewer surgeries, with overall lower medical expenses.

"A significant hypothesis derived from this study states that chiropractors may be instrumental in avoiding procedures or surgeries of unproven cost utility value or uncertain efficacy," adds Dr. Clum.

About Foundation for Chiropractic Progress

A not-for-profit organization, the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress aims to inform and educate the general public about the many benefits associated with chiropractic care. To learn more about the Foundation, please visit us on the web at www.yes2chiropractic.com.

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