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Health Care System

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There are some major changes taking place in our health care system. Most of these changes are focused on making cuts to what procedures are covered. These cutbacks and reforms are generally based on two criteria: the overall expense to the system and the necessity of the procedure. Procedures which are deemed to be more of a luxury than a necessity and others that seem to have a high cost ratio are generally the first to be removed from our health care coverage. There is another shift taking place in the health care system. It is the shift in what people are choosing as their primary source of health care. More and more people are moving away from traditional allopathic medicine and seeking out alternative forms of health care. Chiropractic is at the top of this list. The same people whom are gravitating to chiropractic care are also seeking out other alternatives such as naturopathic care, acupuncturists, herbalists and massage therapy. I feel there are several reasons for people seeking alternative care. The most common reason I hear in my practice is that people feel they are being overmedicated. They will often say that their doctor only saw them for a very short time and then wrote them a prescription for a medication that they were not sure they wanted to take. The second most common reason is that they had been through the medical system and had not experienced any resolve or relief of their condition. These reasons may be more prevalent in our area due to how under serviced we are when it comes to medical facilities and doctors. It is however not unique to this area. All over the country, people are making a conscious informed choice to reduce the amount of medication they are taking.

The differences between traditional medicine and chiropractic care are many, but can be summed up simply, as sickness care versus wellness care. Medicine is focused on one's symptoms and how to get rid of these symptoms or suppress these symptoms. Chiropractic care is focused on treating the underlying cause of symptoms and then maintaining the system in a state of health, to help prevent further sickness. Medicine concerns itself with how you feel and chiropractic is concerned with how you function.

Chiropractic has been shown in study after study to be the most effective and cost effective way of treating musculoskeletal conditions. It is also effective in treating many neurological and other conditions. Chiropractic can also help keep the central nervous system functioning optimally and promote overall wellness. One large scale study published in the archives of internal medicine which compared the records of 700,000 people with chiropractic coverage in their plan to another million people without coverage. The study noted that back pain accounts for more than 100 billion dollars in annual health care costs in the U.S. and is the second leading cause of doctor visits and hospitalizations. This study found that chiropractic cut the cost of treating back pain by 28%, reduced hospitalizations among back pain patients by 41% and reduced back surgeries by 32%. Chiropractic care also cut the need for medical imaging by 37%. It concluded among other benefits that chiropractic care was not only clinically beneficial but also reduced overall health care costs.

With more people choosing chiropractic care over allopathic care and the many medical studies showing the cost effectiveness of Chiropractic care as well as the overwhelming clinical benefits chiropractic provides, it would seem logical that policy makers and insurance companies would want it included in all their policies. Quite the opposite is happening for some reason. All too often chiropractic care and other alternative forms of health care are being excluded from these plans. The next shift that needs to take place is for the insurance industry and government to realize what is the best for people in the health care system. The coverage should reflect what is most beneficial, most cost effective and what people choose. The overall shift should be towards true wellness care and away from symptomatic care.