

**Dr. Mark Saracino**  
Board Certified  
Chiropractic Neurologist

1150 First Avenue, Suite 120  
King of Prussia PA 19406-1341  
610 337 3335 voice  
610 337 4858 fax  
[Mark.Saracino1@juno.com](mailto:Mark.Saracino1@juno.com)  
[DrSaracino.com](http://DrSaracino.com)

## **Curbing Health Costs – No Fault to Holistic Doctors!**

Most know that medical bills are escalating faster than the cost-of-living and inflation, but few know that our tax dollars are contributing to the upward spiral. Government subsidies (free money) and low-interest loans continue to be given for inflationary purchases of costly diagnostic/therapeutic equipment, redundant research projects and unnecessary expansion of health care facilities. Recent studies have found that most communities are oversupplied with MRI and radiation therapy equipment, as an example. Research grants are often distributed without a coordination plan, causing repetition of elaborate and invasive procedures. Holistic and preventative ones are usually not emphasized. Since most of our health care dollars are spent after age 65, because of chronic degenerative diseases, more research on “how we live here and now” should be awarded to reduce costs in the long run. Although the numbers of patient stays in hospitals are decreasing, beds continue to be built.

### **Patients Rights to Know About Costs**

Patients should not be pressured into specific procedures, but be allowed to participate in election, after full disclosure of costs, side effects, long term benefits, and alternatives, such as holistic methods, have been provided. Who would opt to pay for two costly prescriptions when moist heat and gentle massage at home works just as well? As an example, Ophthalmologists seldom recommend the latter for small benign cysts which form inside the upper eyelids. However, optometrists, who would likely favor this conservative therapy, will freely refer a patient to their medical counterparts, ophthalmologists, if the condition does not respond as expected. Not often would the ophthalmologist recommend other alternatives to the medicinal therapy prescribed. Often, the same occurs with chiropractic neurology and medical neurologists.

Doctor's rights should be increased, too. Often we treat and prescribe elaborate diagnostic procedures for malingers we believe are not as injured as they state, solely out of fear of a malpractice suit which will add to everyone's health care costs.

### **Chiropractic Has Contributed to Lowering Costs**

Chiropractic has enjoyed greater recognition in the last few years treating 7-13% of the population consistently, and up to 40% of the population at least once. We have done our share of keeping health care costs down by consuming only 1-3%

of the countries health care costs. Recent research has proven us most effective at returning workers to the job with less cost. Although surgical reduction of disc herniation is, at times, necessary, often it is not. Compare an extended chiropractic therapy plan's cost of \$7,200.00 (three times a week for a year- 144 visits at \$50.00 each) to an orthopedic surgeon's laminectomy, discectomy, fusion, and postoperative hospital stay for \$42,000.00- not to mention extreme discomfort!

Why then, hasn't chiropractic been touted as part of "the cure" for our health cost crisis? Because we receive little federal assistance. Why? In large part because for 24 years the American medical association prohibited its researchers, teachers, and practitioners from collaborating with us. This restricted our research and development funding greatly by preventing us access to "tax-paid-for" hospitals and colleges. Although we are now working in a few hospitals, it is primarily to generate their revenue, not confirm our efficacy.

### **How You Can Help**

How can patients help solve the health care crisis in America? Exercise your rights to have your questions answered on costs, effectiveness, and alternatives outside your practitioner's scope of practice.

In Health,

Mark Saracino, DC, DACAN  
Diplomat American Chiropractic Academy of Neurology