Feedback on the draft code of professional practice for chiropractors:

After looking at this document, I conclude that the documents for each of the states and territories have been blended to create the new proposed document. This was not a useful approach because it has resulted in copious duplication of several of the items.
The general tone of the document is in many sections astoundingly demeaning to chiropractors because it suggests that chiropractors are incapable of clinical decision making and are out to take financial advantage of unsuspecting uninformed individuals.
I strongly suggest you refer to the NSW guidelines for not only are they concise but have resulted in a low rate of problems. Being a NSW chiropractor I am familiar with this state's guidelines and am aware that we have a very low rate of complaints from the public. This is significant because we have in NSW, around 40% of the nation's chiropractors!

The general approach taken in the new proposed guidelines is extremely disappointing as it indicates to me that the board wishes to attempt to cover every imaginable thing that could go 'wrong' in writing and then have little or no engagement with the profession. It has been well demonstrated in many professions that best practice is achieved partly with professional guidelines but also with a strong commitment from the overseeing body in engagement with its professional members. This again has been the case with NSW chiropractors.

The new proposed document runs over several points twice, and sometimes three times. Items covered in the cross-professional code do not need to be repeated over and over in the section specific to chiropractors.

Some items are both insulting to members of the profession as well as unnecessary- for example; " don't x-ray pregnant women" . I am confident you would find that every chiropractic course world-wide would have included that item very early in its tuition through until the senior years. If you were to go to that level of detail, you would soon have a very large and unmanageable list of contraindications and relative contraindications.

Also, if all practice protocols are to be accepted by the profession, new treatments would never be developed. Chiropractors have always been innovative and driven to find better ways to serve our patients. Better innovation comes from development of new ideas and this results in enhanced patient care. Surely this is what we all strive for as health professionals.

The vast majority of chiropractors are caring, dedicated, interested PROFESSIONALS. (I believe the definition of a professional is someone who puts their clients' interests first) whose aim is to serve their patients to the very best of their abilities, and who are guided by their education, experience, desire to help people and compassion. I implore you to produce a leaner and more relevant set of guidelines similar to the current NSW guidelines. Robust complaints- handling procedures must be set up that use peer review components to address any complaints arising. Matters arising must be passed on to inform and educate the rest of the chiropractic community.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Taylor, NSW chiropractor