Feedback on the draft code of professional practice for chiropractors:

In reading this document, it appears that the documents for each of the states and territories have been blended, rather than taking the opportunity to find out which system works best, and then to adopt a similar system, modified for national use. I was only familiar with the NSW document, having never worked in another part of Australia. It is concise, to the point and common-sensical.

In contrast, the new document goes over the same point twice, and sometimes three times. If something is covered in the cross-professional code, it should not be necessary to repeat it again (and again) in the section specific to chiropractors.

Some points are downright insulting to the members of the profession, as it covers items that we were taught very early in our chiropractic education, such as: don't x-ray pregnant women, etc. etc.!

Also, if all practice is supposed 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; if we find something out that works really well, we share it with our colleagues so they can try it out too, and eventually there is a new technique, which amongst other benefits means that we can have even more options to tailor-make the treatment options for our clients, which you state is needed in your guidelines.

Please understand that the vast majority of chiropractors are, in fact, 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 common sense and compassion. Put in guidelines similar to the current NSW ones – NSW is home to 40% of chiropractors, and has a very low rate of complaints, of which we are appraised yearly, when the report is released. Develop a strong complaints handling procedures that use peer review components to address any complaints arising, and then endeavour to inform and educate the rest of the chiropractic community. The more you legislate, the more common sense will evaporate.

Yours sincerely,

Annika Jende, chiropractor in NSW