CODE & GUIDELINE SUBMISSION - please accept

Tamara Taylor to natboards

I have had internet & computer issues and have been trying to send this since 2pm today. PDF would not work, so i have cut & pasted into email. i hope this submission can still be accepted. with thanks. Tamara

Chiropractic Board of Australia
To Whom it May Concern:
RE: Draft Code & Guidelines for Chiropractic Registration

I have a number of concerns regarding the draft code and guidelines, mostly pertaining to patient care guidelines. The sections of concern are covered within "Code of Professional Practice for Chiropractors in Australia" part 2 – "Working as a Practitioner".

In section 2.11 Duration and frequency of Care, no allowance is made for children or adults with ongoing chronic problems due to severe accidents or injury where the patient finds they gain relief with chiropractic care but due to the severity and chronicity, a regular supportive care scenario is appropriate. This section also does not allow for parents that chose regular care options for children who are involved in sports such as contact sports, BMX etc that often leads to injuries. Parents of children with learning and emotional issues that find their children gain benefits from regular care are also not catered for, as are adults with ongoing issues such as disc prolapse (literature indicates many resolve without surgery within 2 years) as a method of pain relief.

I fully support the move to make patients less dependant on care and encouraging their "body to do the work", but before this point stabilisation is important (I refer to plasticity of the nervous system and patterning). Therefore, majority of my patients have care extending beyond the 3 month mark as their bodies stabilise and their appointments are spread out as quickly as their response to care allows to monthly, and then they have the option to "call when they need us next time" or continue to stretch out appointments. From my experience, many of my patients find their overall health, wellbeing and vitality has increased with their care and their stress levels have decreased. They report feeling "lighter and more balanced" and therefore wish to continue with regular care (monthly / 6 weekly / every 2 months / every 3 months).

I am concerned that chiropractors will be fearful in the care of children for non-musculoskeletal issues and will become less skilled as a result. I also am concerned that chiropractors may feel pressured to discharge patients from care early due to these guidelines. Chiropractic care takes time and is not a "magic bullet" solution. Often we are providing care for patients that have had issues for many years – care and stabilisation is not a process that can be boxed with a time limit but is a path taking into consideration activities of daily living, history, structural damage and patient attitudes. If Chiropractors become concerned over time limits of care, patients will feel this, and it will impact care and resolution negatively.

I understand and fully support the need for the prevention of over-servicing of patients, but at the same time believe we need a working model that is appropriate for clinical practice. I hope these thoughts assist in the formation of a working final code.