

[IMAGE]

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Chiropractic Round Table

By Brian Sutton, DC

The purpose of this letter is to apprise you of an opportunity that has the potential of helping the chiropractic profession achieve a tremendous step forward during the 1990s.

I have been working recently to put together a worldwide electronic Chiropractic Round Table.

In a nutshell, upon implementation, chiropractors will be able to communicate with each other instantly via their computers across the country and other parts of the world. At this writing, it appears that the costs will be next to nothing. Access will be possible 24-hours per day, 365 days per year.

The Chiropractic Round Table will consist of four major divisions, each described below:

1. An electronic bulletin board.
2. A library system.
3. Real-time conferences.
4. Electronic mail.

Bulletin Board System: This will consist of a network of messages, notes, and letters left by any doctors accessing the system. The purpose is to promote thorough discussion or information dissemination. There are innumerable topics that might be discussed here, but some preliminary subjects might be:

- **Clinical Case Management:** For example, you have just scheduled your first AIDS patient. What precautions should you take? What special procedures have seemed to be effective for different doctors and patients? What legal requirements must be met? Who has had some successes?
- **Medical Research Validating Chiropractic:** While we all know that there is quite a bit of this floating around, wouldn't it be nice to be able to find it when we need it? Complete with results and references?

- Research that Validates Natural Health Care Methods and Discredits Medicinal Management: For example, studies and/or expert medical testimony showing the danger of giving aspirin for mild fevers. This area could house some great ammunition to use when dealing with patients or debating MDs.

- Chiropractic Research: Results and references of completed projects, plus news of ongoing studies.

- College News: What exciting things are happening at each of the colleges that the profession should be aware of? This area could also be used to have questions answered about the college by the faculty.

- Risk Management: Have your general malpractice questions answered by experts in the field.

- Insurance Problems: What are the correct codes to use? Which submission formats create the least amount of turmoil? Which companies are discriminating illegally? What about Medicare?

- Specific Technique Communications: Doctors interested in S.O.T., Gonstead, Grostic, Thompson, etc., will have areas set up to discuss and consult with other doctors and teachers about their specific technique.

- Students: Students will be able to communicate with the profession-at-large and voice their concerns or have questions answered.

- Chiropractic Assistants (CAs): They will have their own area to sharpen their skills by communicating with other CAs.

- An area for suppliers to show what's new and available to the profession.

The possibilities are endless.

All of this information would be stored permanently, for access at any time. This will be especially valuable for new practitioners who haven't yet learned the hard way.

The system remembers how much you have read, allowing you to see (if you prefer) just the new messages each time you use it.

Libraries: The on-line library will contain a wide variety of archived reference materials, conference transcripts, computer programs, seminar schedules, and anything else that can be stored via computer (text, graphics, and programs) that will be of benefit to the profession. Massive amounts of information can be stored in the libraries.

Real-Time Conferences: As opposed to the bulletin board, a real-time conference is an event where many doctors are on-line at once. Normally, there would be a keynote speaker whose discussion would be viewed by all attendees simultaneously. Each doctor has a chance to ask questions, respond to the statement, etc. Imagine attending a meeting from the comfort of your home -- no travel time, air fare, etc.

A few possibilities for conferences might be (but not limited to) motivational seminars, dissertations by experts in a specific field or techniques, debates, meetings of a local or national society, or just when two or more doctors would like to get together to "shoot the breeze."

The larger conferences would be scheduled at specific times. Private meetings are also possible.

Electronic Mail: Would you like to send a letter to a colleague, order a piece of equipment from a supplier, or request a college catalogue for a potential student? The electronic mail feature will send your correspondence instantly and cheaper than the post office.

Each time you connect to the system, you will be informed if you have any letters waiting. You then have the option of reading your mail, and/or sending it to your printer for a permanent record.

If I've been able to communicate to you any of the implications of this new medium for our profession, you should, by now, be tremendously excited. Let me tell you some more.

The company I am currently negotiating this system with already has the machinery in place and is, in fact, providing a similar service to many other professions. The service is available in the United States, Canada, Japan, West Germany, Switzerland, and Austria at this time; they expect to continually expand to new areas. The connection is via telephone (by modem) and is a local (non-toll) call in most cities. Almost any brand of computer will work.

The cost in the United States looks like it will be approximately \$5 per month, flat rate, for unlimited access to the bulletin board and mail service. If you attend a real-time conference, or transfer programs or materials from the library, there is an hourly charge of \$6 for using these services.

There is also an additional charge if you feel you must use the service during peak hours (business hours, Monday through Friday). All in all, I think you'll agree that the service is dirt cheap.

Now there are only two stumbling blocks in implementing this Chiropractic Round Table.

1. I must be sure and convince the company I'm negotiating with, that our profession wants and will use it.
2. We must act quickly before the medical profession (who has a similar arrangement, but on a smaller scale) finds out my intentions and exerts its influence to kill our chances to get this network started.

What I am asking is this: Every doctor, student, supplier, and CA who thinks that this is the sort of service to which they would subscribe, please send a note, postcard, letter, business card, etc., containing the words, "Chiropractic Round Table," to this address:

Citrus Park Chiropractic
7506 Ehrlich Road
Tampa, Florida 33625

Do it immediately! As soon as there is enough response to give me some bargaining power, I will be able to finish my negotiations and inform everyone of how to sign up if we are successful. Please, no phone calls --

my staff would not be able to handle the response I anticipate.

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