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*Dynamic Chiropractic* – February 10, 1997, Vol. 15, Issue 04

## **Pro-Chiropractic Associations: A Model for the Future**

### **European Chiropractors Create Solidarity with Patients**

By Editorial Staff

What is a pro-chiropractic association? Why have over 53,000 Danish chiropractic patients joined? How do you establish one in your area?

Pro-chiropractic associations (PCAs) are organizations of chiropractic patients and supporters that band together to lobby for their rights and those of their chiropractors. They have been formed throughout Europe: Cyprus, Denmark, England, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Switzerland are all members of the European Federation of Pro Chiropractic Associations (EFPC).

If we assume that the average chiropractor treats at least 500 patients each year, that equates to almost 28 million chiropractic patients worldwide (approximately 26 million in the United States). Who protects these patients' rights to choose a chiropractic doctor instead of a medical doctor? Who speaks for them in the halls of Parliament and Congress? Who will stand up for them if they do not stand up for themselves?

These are the issues that have given birth to the European Federation of Pro Chiropractic Associations. Denmark developed the prototype organization back in 1922, but the EFPC was not founded until a 1966 meeting in Paris. At that time, the EFPC president was the late Erik Sabroe of Denmark, who paid all the expenses of the federation out of his own pocket. The Danish Pro Chiropractic Assoc. now has over 53,000 members; the most recent PCA was created in Finland.

The pro-chiropractic Associations produce pamphlets, posters, magazines and videos extolling the value of chiropractic care. They have lobbyists who meet with legislators and government officials on issues of licensure and scope of practice. They share information and work with the members of the European Pro Chiropractic Associations.

EFPC, which had not had a meeting in a number of years, had a bit of a rebirth with a meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark in November, 1993. EFPC's 1993 renaissance has resulted in several long-range

goals:

- to promote chiropractic in Europe to allow all people access, if needed, to qualified chiropractic care;
- **to establish and develop common interests;**
- to support and assist national pro-chiropractic associations in their work for recognition of chiropractic;
- to create solidarity between patients and chiropractors in Europe by promoting their mutual interests.

The federation has stressed that it will not interfere in the activities of any established national chiropractic professional association. EFPC will only join in a national association's work if it is invited, and EFPC will only act on decisions that are reached by consensus or by a qualified majority.

Other countries are hoping to create their own PCAs, but know it will require a dedicated individual. For those interested in establishing a pro-chiropractic association in their country, province or community, EFPC president Ann-Liss Taarup of Denmark has this comment: "Look for a person in your own family. Do like they have done in Germany, Finland, Italy and elsewhere: choose a wife, husband, sister, father, etc., of a chiropractor."

Because of the different licensing laws among European nations, the PCAs work differently with the national chiropractic associations. In some countries, the law puts DCs on a level equivalent to MDs; in France, chiropractors are still being charged with practicing medicine without a license.

The next meeting of the EFPCA will coincide with the meeting of the European Chiropractic Union on May 8-10, 1997 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (see front page article in this issue of the ECU meeting). This will give representatives of the European chiropractic associations and the pro-chiropractic associations a chance to exchange ideas and work together for the good of chiropractors and chiropractic patients throughout Europe.

### **European Federation of Pro-Chiropractic Associations**

*Note:* If you're calling from the U.S., you must dial the international access code (011) first, then the numbers listed below.

#### **Denmark**

Nikolai Pedersen, president  
Landsforeningen  
Kiropraktikkens Fremme  
Under Elmene 7A, 2300 S  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
Tel: 45 31 575655  
Fax: 45 31 570434

### **France**

Philippe Richon, DC  
12 Quai Eugene Perrier  
51000 Chalons-Sur-Marne, France  
Tel./Fax: 33 26 68 13 42

### **Finland**

Semo Valli, president  
Finnish Pro-Chiropractic Assoc.  
Paanakedonkatu 12  
28100 Pori, Finland  
Tel: 358 2 6338028

### **Germany**

Holger Paris, president  
Vereinigung der Freunde und Patienten  
der Chiropractic in Deutschland  
Bohlweg 24, 38100 Braunschweig  
Germany  
Tel: 49 531 144206  
Fax: 49 531 144287

## **Great Britain**

Penny Copland-Griffiths, president  
Chiropractic Advancement Assoc.  
Trowle House, Wingfield  
Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LE  
England  
Tel: 44 1225 752199  
Fax: 44 1225 769842

## **Italy**

Louise Pellissier, president  
Associazione Italiana Pro-Chiropratica  
Piazza Principe Tomaso 5  
11017 Morgex (AO), Italy  
Tel: 39 165 800287

## **Netherlands**

Ms. Carolien van Poecke, president  
Voorende 22  
7213 XZ Gorssel  
The Netherlands  
Tel: 31 575 492728  
Fax: 31 575 494568

## **Spain**

Andrea Duque, president  
Asociacion Pro-Quiropractica de Espana  
Estrecho de Corea 22  
28027 Madrid, Spain  
Tel: 34 551-9199  
Fax: 34 321-3119

## **Switzerland**

Ernst Kistler, president  
Swiss Pro-Chiropractic Assoc.  
Postfach 160  
5200 Brugg, Switzerland  
Tel: 41 56 4415241  
Fax: 41 56 4422094

## **Officers of the EFPCA**

President: Ann-Liss Taarup (Denmark)  
Vice President: Heinrich Buchbinder (Switzerland)  
Secretary: Louise Pellissier (Italy)  
Treasurer: Elke Nimbach (Germany)

For more information on the EFPC and its upcoming meeting, contact Ms. Taarup by phone/fax at (011) 45 39 400540. She can also be reached by writing to:

Ms. Ann-Liss Taarup  
President, EFPC  
Frederikkevej 2A  
Hellerup 2900  
Copenhagen, Denmark



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