

Chiropractic Research History in Manitoba

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November of 1975 was a watershed moment for chiropractic research in Canada. A group of Manitoba chiropractors had a remarkably prescient idea. They were to start an organization with the specific goal of facilitating chiropractic research in Canada. Drs. Ronald Collett, Terry Watkins, Allan Hawkins, John (Steve) Bloomer and Walter Savickey called their fledgling organization the Chiropractic Foundation for Spinal Research (CFSR).

Based in Winnipeg for over twenty years, the CFSR funded research projects, sponsored CMCC student re-

search awards, and supported researchers as they worked toward their PhD's. Some of the early research by Dr. J. David Cassidy, Dr. Walter Herzog, and Dr. Mark Erwin, to name a few, was funded by this organization. In addition to funding projects, the CFSR realized that to develop a critical mass of chiropractic research they must help chiropractors attain higher academic degrees. Dr. Paul Bishop was the first of such chiropractors. He attained his PhD with financial help from CFSR, which helped launch this new era of DC/PhD chiropractic researchers.

Beyond the five founding members, many other Manitoba chiropractors invested considerable time and energy in those early years. In 1995, “*In recognition of exceptional service to spinal research,*” Dr. Richard Corbett was inducted as a Life Member in the CFSR for his work from 1980 through the early 1990’s. In 1999 Dr. Martin Gurvey, Dr. Allan Daien, and Dr. Ted Kurtas were recognized for their, “... *Longstanding Dedication and Commitment to the Promotion of Chiropractic Research in Canada.*” In fact, all Manitoba chiropractors contributed to the CFSR.

Manitoba chiropractors were the first in Canada to donate annually to chiropractic research. Through the 1980’s and 1990’s each Manitoba chiropractor donated \$100 annually. These donations were the primary source of funding for the CFSR. Although modest by today’s research funding standards, that money was pivotal in increasing Canadian chiropractic research capacity and set the standard for research donating by our profession. Donating was made “easier” by the charitable organisation status the CFSR had attained – a remarkable feat in itself.

Over time the CFSR board members realized that this organization must expand and become a national endeavour with a broad focus that included all Canadian chiropractors. A presentation was made to the Canadian Chiropractic Association and a Research Task Force was formed to do an analysis of areas of research and make recommendations for a plan to look forward. In 1997 the Chiropractic Foundation for Spinal Research became the Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation. The headquarters of the new organization moved from Winnipeg to Toronto and Dr. Allan Gotlib was appointed as the CCA Director of Research Programs and an officer of the CCRF board.

The Manitoba years helped foment chiropractic research in Canada and were instrumental in planting the seed of chiropractic research in this country. Thirty-three years later, with the help of the CCRF, the Manitoba government and the Manitoba Chiropractors Association’s investment in research capital, a CCRF Professorship in Spine Biomechanics and Neurophysiology will be created at the University of Manitoba. Another milestone for chiropractic research in Manitoba is on the horizon.

Manitoba chiropractors are also actively engaged in research. Dr. Geoff Gelley is currently working on a Master’s degree in Medical Rehabilitation at the University

of Manitoba. His thesis is titled, *Characterization of chiropractor hand movements during spinal manipulative therapy.* This observational study seeks to describe the mechanical parameters of spinal manipulative therapy (SMT). Dr. Gelley would like to know if these parameters result in a characteristic acceleration profile and to see if a correlation exists between this profile and the physical attributes of the patient.

Dr. Gelley will use a triaxial accelerometer to determine the hand acceleration of spinal manipulation. The primary objective of this study is to determine the acceleration characteristics of SMT. The spinal level at which SMT is delivered will be grouped into three separate categories: cervical, thoracic, and lumbar-sacral. Acceleration parameters will be compared across the three spinal levels. A secondary objective is to determine if the characteristics of SMT correlate to morphometric variables of the individuals receiving SMT.

Dr. Stephan Cooper is also working on a Master’s degree, in health ergonomics from the University of Derby. In addition Dr. Cooper also participates in practice-based research through Cleveland Chiropractic College in Kansas City. His recent work includes a review of conservative care for tendinopathy titled *Chiropractic management of tendinopathy: a literature synthesis*, and a pilot clinical trial titled *Comparison of mechanical force, manually assisted Activator manipulation versus manual side-posture, high-velocity, low-amplitude manipulation in patients with low back pain: A randomized pilot study.* These studies have been submitted for publication and are currently in review.

Dr. Cooper is also working on collecting follow-up data on a retrospective study of the implementation of chiropractic care in an industrial setting. This project was originally presented at the World Federation of Chiropractic/FCER International Conference on Chiropractic Research (ICCR) in May of 2007.

Effort, at the provincial level, is currently focused on developing a culture of research among Manitoba’s chiropractic clinicians through the Manitoba Chiropractors’ Association Research Committee. This committee was set up specifically with this goal in mind. The MCA realized it is not enough to simply produce research. Research must be incorporated into the day-to-day practice of the average chiropractic clinician. To address this, the MCA research committee produces a newsletter that dis-

cusses research issues, recent articles and developments in the profession. They also maintain a small research library with journals such as the JMPT, the JCCA, and Spine. Other ideas that are to be implemented by the MCA research committee include lunch-and-learn type talks focused on making research accessible and case report writing.

The secondary goal of the MCA Research Committee is to be a resource to the MCA board and other subcommittees. Standards, news releases, guidelines, recent arti-

cles, and other items are reviewed and compared to current available evidence or critically appraised. The Research Committee can then issue an evidence-based opinion on these issues to help inform decisions by the various committees.

Manitoba has had a long and proud tradition of chiropractic research. With developments such as University-based researchers, research chairs, chiropractic community and CCRF involvement, the future of Manitoban and Canadian chiropractic research looks as bright as ever.



Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation
La Fondation canadienne pour la recherche en chiropratique
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The Foundation has several categories of membership but you may donate any amount you wish. Each member receives a tax receipt for full donation amount, the Chiropractic Research Bulletin, a listing in the Bulletin (if you wish), and a Membership Certificate for your office.

Every dollar you donate helps us reach our goals. Support a university-based Chiropractic Research Chair in your province. Each Chair requires \$500,000 so please be generous. Help us reach our goals!

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