



ICA Meets with NCCIH Director and Staff

February 1, 2018 (Falls Church, VA): On January 18, in an historic meeting on behalf of the chiropractic profession, representatives from the International Chiropractors Association (ICA) met with David Shurtleff, Ph.D., Acting Director of the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and members of his staff including Acting Deputy Director, Wendy J. Weber, N.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.; Mary Beth Kester, M.S., Director of Policy, Planning, and Evaluation; and Partap S. Khalsa, D.C., Ph.D., Director, Division of Extramural Activities.

Dr. Stephen Welsh, ICA Vice President led the discussion which focused on both research related to chiropractic and pain management as well as a greater discourse about chiropractic as a system of healing and the need to develop more chiropractic researchers as well as to partner Ph.D. researchers with the chiropractic community.

Also joining the meeting were Bridget Van Egmond, MBA, ICA's Director of Business Development and Beth Clay, ICA Director of Government Relations. Ms. Clay discussed the new Congressional Integrative Health and Wellness Caucus as well as the types of projects previously and currently funded related to chiropractic. Types of research have ranged from conference grants, curriculum development and extensive research on how to design research, to actual studies evaluating chiropractic adjustment for specific conditions, typically low back pain.

Among the issues discussed was the role research plays in setting policy. Ms. Clay detailed the great frustration in the community when government agencies such as AHRQ use systematic reviews in policy development and the methodology of the systematic review eliminates most of the published research.

A major topic of conversation was the opioid crisis and how important a role chiropractic and other non-drug options for care are to a course correction on pain management across health care.

Dr. Khalsa, a chiropractor employed at the NIH, challenged ICA to take a leadership role within the academic community in promoting research and the development of researchers within the profession.

Also discussed was the impending government shut down and the challenge of funding new research when the budget of the Center has not seen significant growth in recent years. NCCIH like all government agencies by law are not allowed to directly lobby Congress about their budgetary needs. It will be up to the ICA and the integrative health community to make those appeals to Congress and the White House.

The meeting was a great opportunity for ICA to increase awareness about the need for increased and improved research on chiropractic as well as to develop an ongoing dialogue between ICA and NCCIH.