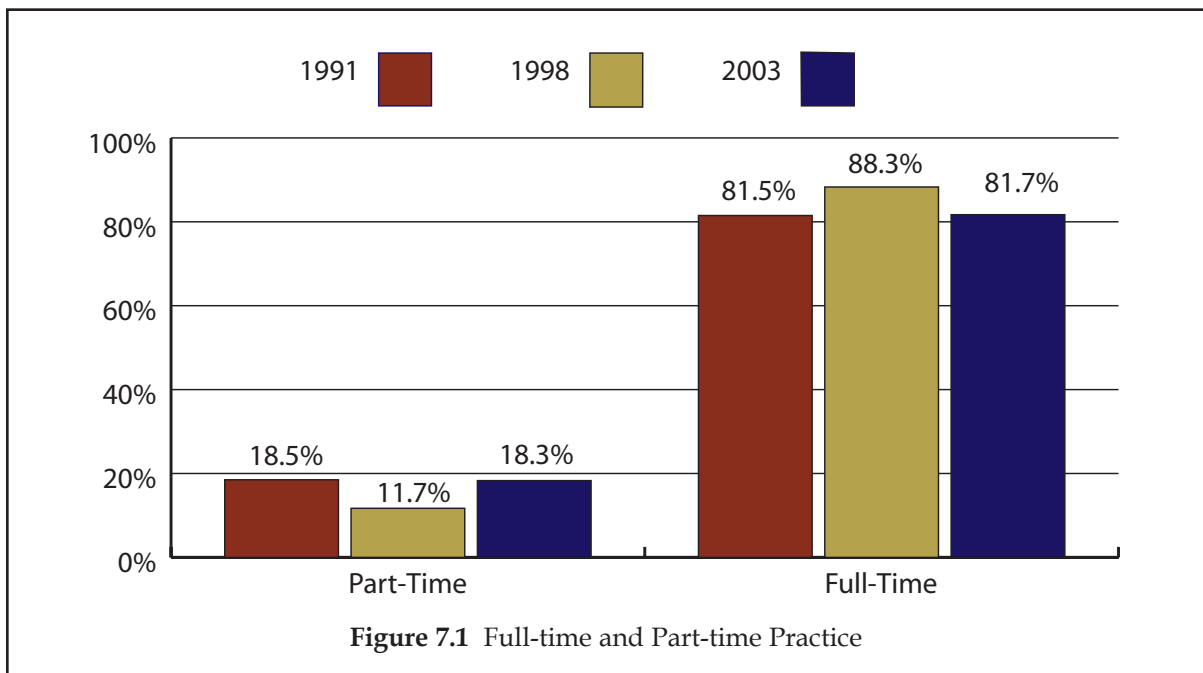


Chapter 7

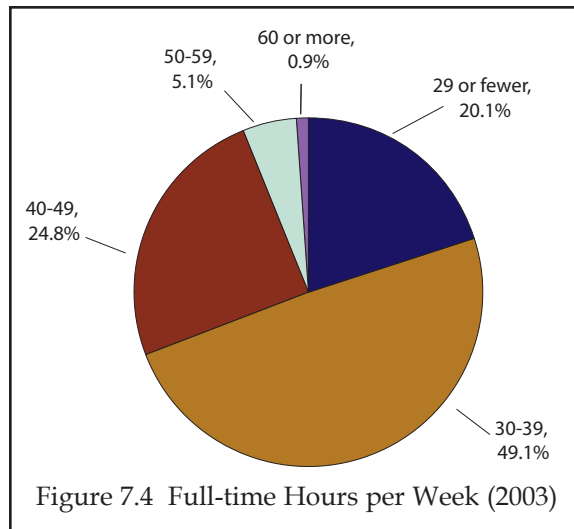
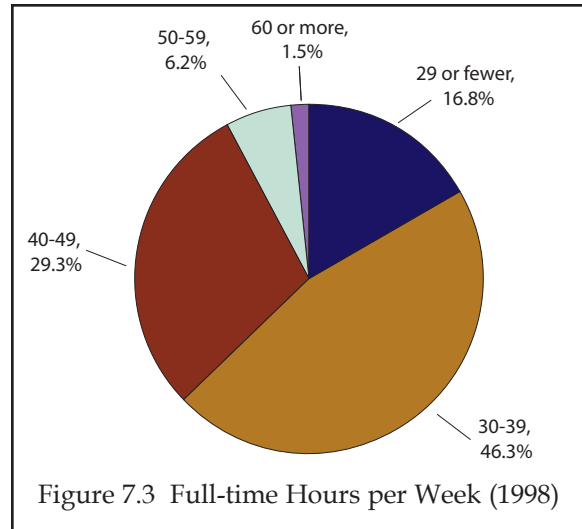
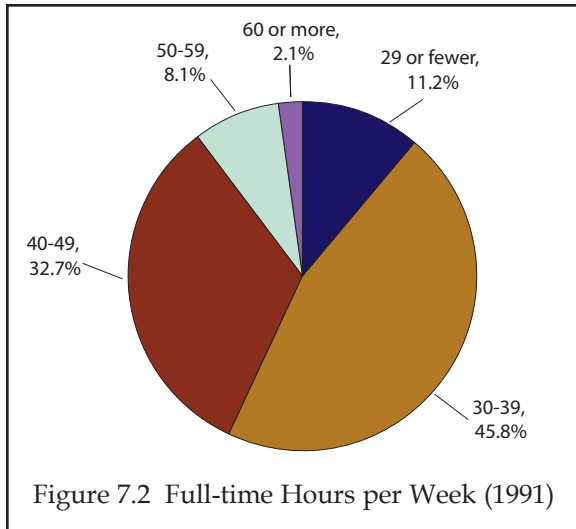
The Chiropractic Practitioner

The first section of the 2003 *Survey of Chiropractic Practice* addressed the chiropractic practitioner. The survey was intended for licensed and full-time practitioners of chiropractic. Therefore, a notice at the beginning of the survey requested that only chiropractic practitioners with active, full-time status fill out the survey. Those who did not meet these criteria were instructed to indicate their part-time status and return the survey without completing it. Respondents next answered questions regarding personal demographic data, categories of patient care, and their work environment.

Nearly 82% (81.7%) of respondents reported their practice as full-time, compared to 88.3% in the 1998 job analysis survey and 81.5% in the 1991 survey (Figure 7.1).



Full-time respondents indicated the average number of hours per week they devoted to their practice. Nearly half (49.1%) of chiropractors work 30 to 39 hours per week, while one-quarter (24.8%) work 40 to 49 hours per week. The longitudinal trend revealed when comparing the 1991, 1998, and 2003 survey data is that more practitioners are working 30 to 39 hours per week than previously, and fewer are working more or less than that (Figure 7.2, Figure 7.3, and Figure 7.4).

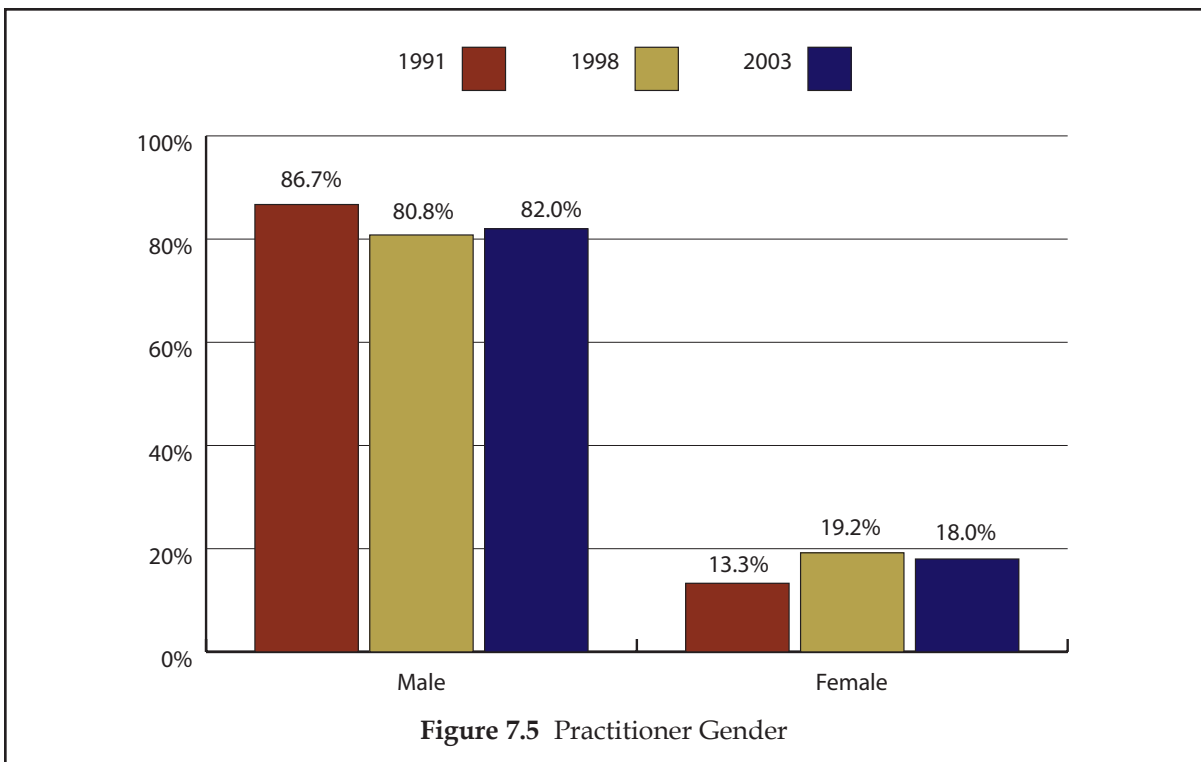


Personal Demographics

In the *Demographic Data* section of the survey, respondents answered questions concerning personal characteristics such as gender and ethnicity.

Gender

- According to the 2003 job analysis survey data, 82.0% of chiropractic practitioners are male, and 18.0% are female. In comparison to the NBCE 1991 job analysis survey, the percentage of female chiropractors has increased approximately 5% (Figure 7.5). These results are similar to the 1997 American Chiropractic Association survey percentages, which found U.S. chiropractors to be 83.7% male and 16.3% female (American Chiropractic Association 1999, p. 19).



Ethnicity

- Regarding practitioner ethnicity, the NBCE 2003 job analysis survey found that 91.5% of chiropractors are Caucasian, down 2% from the 1998 survey and 4% from the 1991 survey.
- Asian, African American, Hispanic, Native American, and other ethnicities comprise the remaining 8.5%. Since 1998, the percentages of Asian and Hispanic chiropractors have increased (Table 7.1).

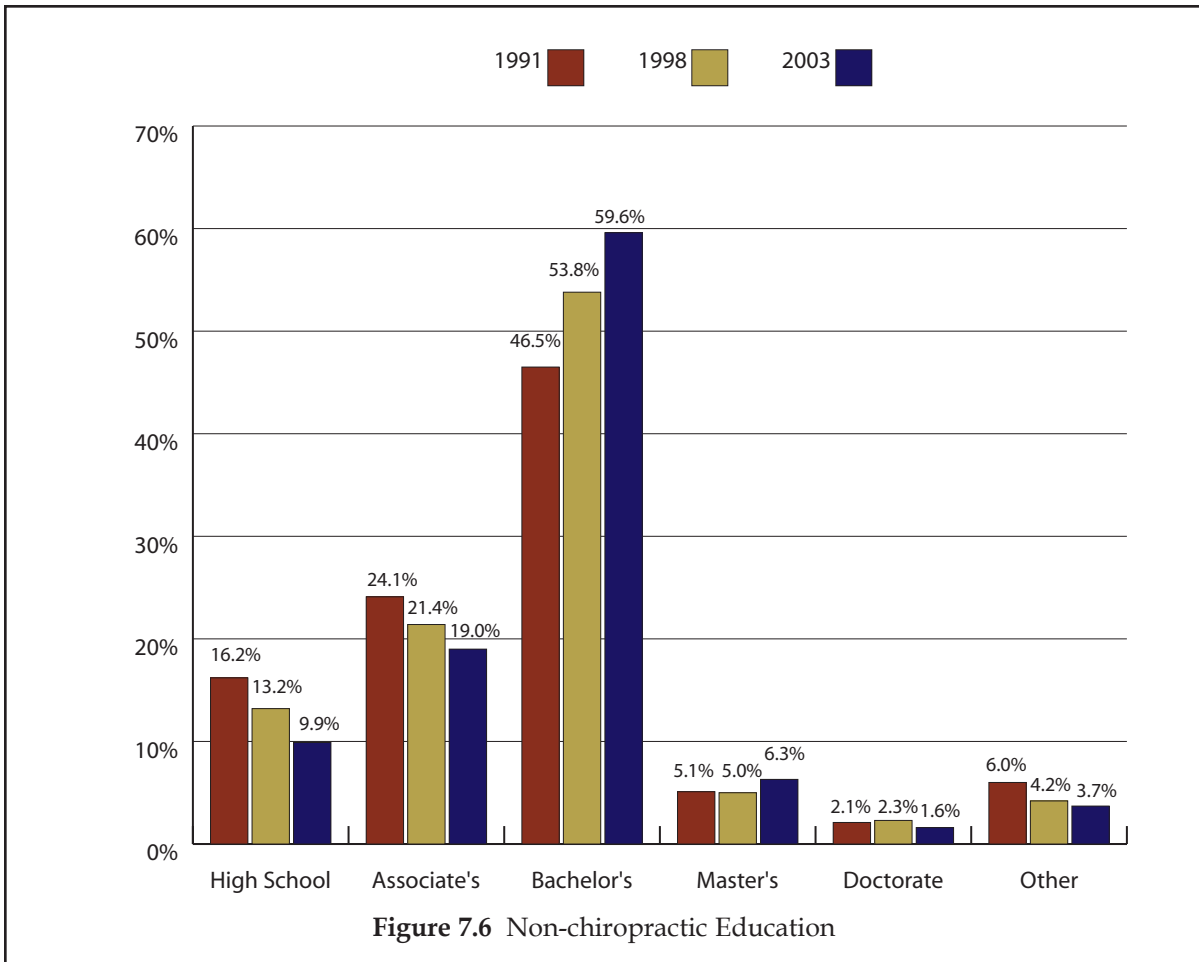
Ethnic Origin of Respondents			
	1991	1998	2003
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.8%	1.8%	2.7%
Black or African American	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%
Caucasian	95.5%	93.5%	91.5%
Hispanic	1.6%	1.7%	2.2%
Native American	0.2%	0.8%	0.6%
Other	1.2%	1.6%	1.5%
Mixed	—	—	0.7%

Table 7.1 Ethnic Origin

Level of Non-Chiropractic Education

The *Demographic Data* section also instructed participants to indicate the highest level of non-chiropractic education they had attained. The level of pre-chiropractic education has steadily risen from 1991, as revealed in the increased number of chiropractors with bachelor's degrees as shown in Figure 7.6.

- Ninety percent of chiropractors hold a post secondary academic degree.
- Nearly 60% (59.6%) of chiropractic practitioners have bachelor's degrees. Compared to the 1991 and 1998 survey data, the portion of chiropractors with bachelor's and master's degrees has increased.
- Also, 6.3% of respondents have master's degrees, and 1.6% have doctorates in non-chiropractic fields.



Specialization

Regarding other certifications and specialization, respondents were asked to indicate if they had post-graduate diplomate status through a specialty board, council, academy, college, or association.

- Of the survey respondents, 64% have no diplomate status or equivalent specialty certification, while 21.5% indicated that they have worked toward diplomate status. The remaining 14.4% have diplomate status or the equivalent.

Chiropractic Colleges Represented

Respondents were asked to indicate the college from which they received their Doctor of Chiropractic degree. One-fourth (24.8%) of respondents received their chiropractic degree from one of the two Palmer colleges, and 14.8% received their Doctor of Chiropractic degree from one of the two Life colleges. Since 1991, new colleges have been added to this list¹ (Table 7.2).

College	1991	1998	2003	College	1991	1998	2003
Anglo-European College of Chiropractic Dorset, England	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	Palmer West College of Chiropractic San Jose, California	2.2%	3.7%	3.5%
Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College Ontario, Canada	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	Parker College of Chiropractic Dallas, Texas	0.7%	3.1%	4.3%
Cleveland Chiropractic College Kansas City, Missouri	3.9%	3.5%	4.3%	Pennsylvania College of Chiropractic Horsham, Pennsylvania	0.8%	0.7%	0.4%
Cleveland Chiropractic College Los Angeles, California	3.5%	2.9%	1.8%	Royal Melbourne Inst. of Technology Victoria, Australia	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Institut Francais de Chiropractic Paris, France	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic Spartanburg, South Carolina	2.9%	1.7%	2.4%
Life Chiropractic College, West Hayward, California	1.3%	2.6%	3.7%	Southern California College of Chiropractic Pico Rivera, California	0.3%	1.0%	0.0%
Life University College of Chiropractic Marietta, Georgia	9.0%	12.3%	11.1%	South California University of Health Sciences Whittier, California	6.6%	7.5%	7.2%
Lincoln College of Chiropractic Indianapolis, Indiana	No data	0.6%	0.9%	Sydney College of Chiropractic Sydney, Australia	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Logan College of Chiropractic Chesterfield, Missouri	8.0%	8.4%	7.7%	Texas Chiropractic College Pasadena, Texas	3.5%	4.3%	3.4%
National College of Chiropractic Lombard, Illinois	11.6%	9.2%	10.4%	University of Bridgeport College of Chiropractic Bridgeport, Connecticut	N/A	0.2%	0.5%
New York Chiropractic College Seneca Falls, New York	7.4%	7.3%	6.7%	University of Quebec at Trois-Rivieres Quebec, Canada	N/A	No data	0.0%
Northwestern College of Chiropractic Bloomington, Minnesota	4.5%	4.5%	5.9%	Western States Chiropractic College Portland, Oregon	3.2%	3.7%	3.0%
Palmer College of Chiropractic Davenport Iowa	27.7%	22.3%	21.3%	Other	2.8%	0.5%	1.0%

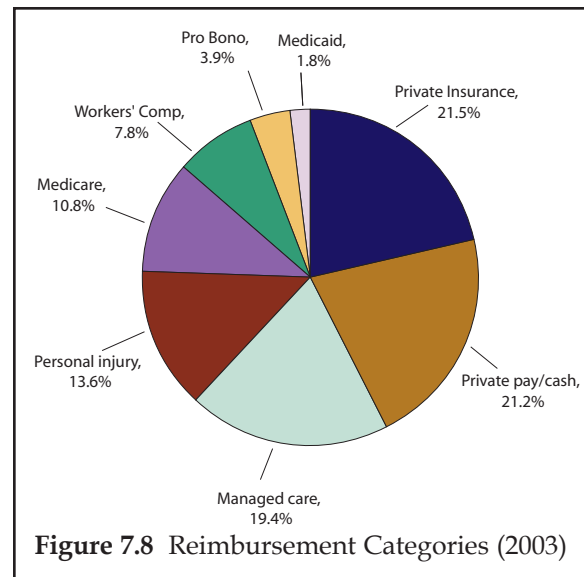
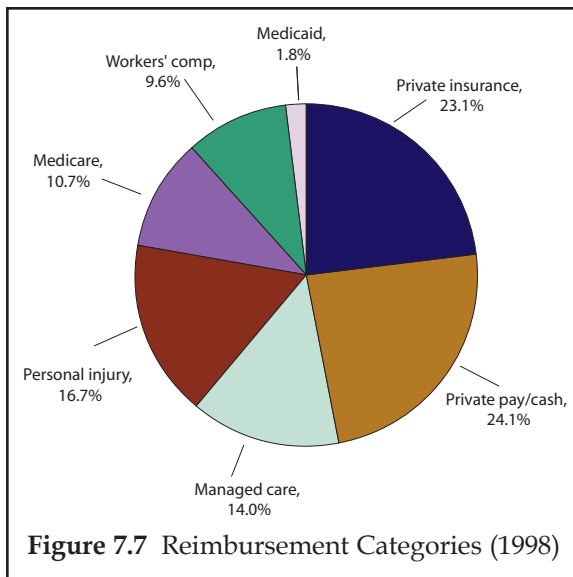
Table 7.2 Chiropractic Colleges Represented

¹ "No data" in place of a value for particular institutions in Table 7.2 denotes data were not obtained for that institution at the time of the survey. "N/A" denotes the program did not exist when data were obtained.

Coverage of Chiropractic Care

The *Workers' Compensation*, *Managed Care*, and *Insurance* sections of the 2003 job analysis survey addressed types and percentages of reimbursement for chiropractic services and participation in managed care programs and Medicaid. Practitioners were asked to indicate the percentage of cases per year that were covered by particular types of payment (such as private pay or Medicare) (Figure 7.7 and 7.8).

- Private insurance covered about one-fifth (21.5%) of cases per year, compared to 23.1% in 1998.
- Private pay/cash covered about one-fifth (21.2%) of cases per year, compared to 24.1% in 1998.
- Managed care covered about one-fifth (19.4%) of cases per year, compared to 14.0% in 1998.
- Medicare covered 10.8% of cases per year; Medicaid covered 1.8% of cases per year, both unchanged from 1998.
- Pro bono services account for 3.9% of chiropractic cases.
- Of the remainder of cases, 13.6% were Personal Injury, and 7.8% were Workers' Compensation claims.



Managed Care

Respondents to the 1998 NBCE survey answered the question, “In how many managed care programs are you a member?” Seventy percent indicated that they participated in one or more managed care programs. The current survey asked only, “Do you participate in any managed care networks?” Seventy-three percent of respondents replied affirmatively.

Medicaid

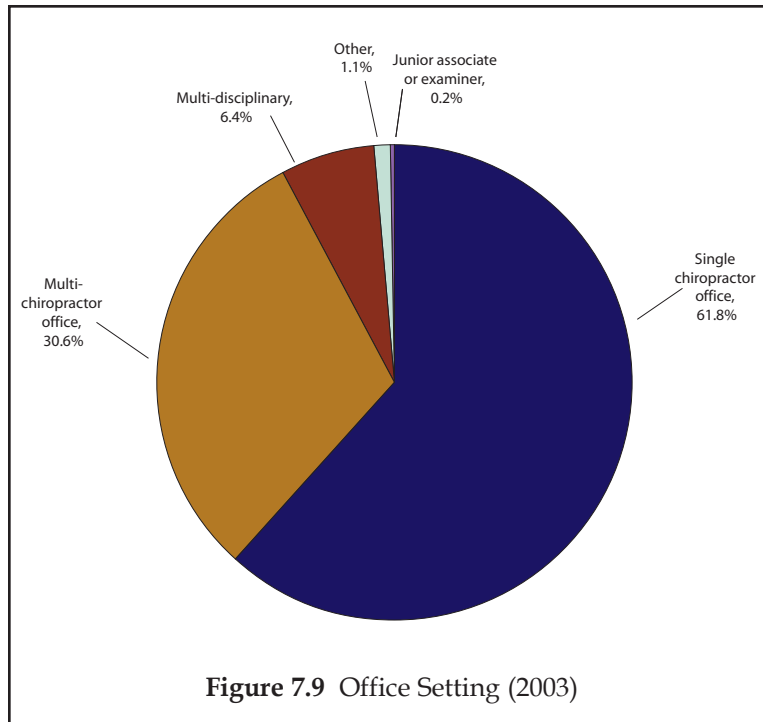
The current survey asked, “Do you participate in your state’s Medicaid program?” Nearly 56% (55.7%) responded “No,” 29.9% replied “Yes,” and 14.4% replied “Does not apply in my state.” In the 1998 survey, 45.7% of respondents indicated that they participated in their state’s program, and 69.9% indicated that their state included chiropractic coverage under Medicaid or state aid.

The Chiropractic Work Environment

The *Work Environment* section of the survey investigated the typical nature of chiropractic practice. This section probed areas such as office setting and location, office procedures, and referral patterns.

Office Setting

- The majority (61.8%) of those participating in the current survey indicated that they practiced in an office setting in which they were the only doctor. (Figure 7.9). The 1991 job analysis survey found that approximately two-thirds of chiropractors worked in a one-doctor office setting, while the 1998 survey found that 63.1% did so. This reveals a slight downward trend in the proportion of doctors working in single-practitioner offices.
- Nearly one-third (30.6%) of respondents share an office with one or more other chiropractors, essentially unchanged from the 31.3% reported in 1998.
- A slightly larger proportion of respondents practice in multidisciplinary offices compared to 1998, 6.4% versus 4.4%.
- A few chiropractors work as junior associates/examining doctors (0.2%) or work in other office arrangements (1.1%). Both are similar to the 1998 data.



- Of the 2003 survey respondents, 12.5% practice in more than one office location, representing little change from 1998 and a slight increase from 1991 (Table 7.3).
- Additionally, 54.7% of chiropractic practitioners deliver chiropractic care outside an office setting, revealing a 6.6% decrease from the 1998 percentage and a 17.3% decrease from 1991.
- The percentage of chiropractic practitioners who have staff privileges at a medical or osteopathic hospital has increased slightly (6.0% vs. 5.2% in 1998 and 4.9% in 1991).

Office Location	1991 (yes)	1998 (yes)	2003 (yes)
Do you practice in more than one office location?	10.1%	12.2%	12.5%
Do you ever deliver chiropractic care outside an office setting, such as in a patient's home?	72.0%	61.3%	54.7%
Do you have staff privileges at a medical or osteopathic hospital?	4.9%	5.2%	6.0%

Table 7.3 Office Location

Office Procedures

The 1998 and 2003 job analysis surveys included questions concerning the delegation of procedures that were not covered in the 1991 survey (Table 7.4). There is little difference between the two data sets.

- 8.4% of chiropractic practitioners delegate the taking of case histories to a chiropractic assistant.
- 10.9% of chiropractic practitioners delegate the taking of radiographs to a chiropractic assistant.
- 33.3% of chiropractic practitioners delegate the developing of radiographs to a chiropractic assistant.
- 41.5% of chiropractic practitioners primarily delegate the administration of physiotherapy to a chiropractic assistant.

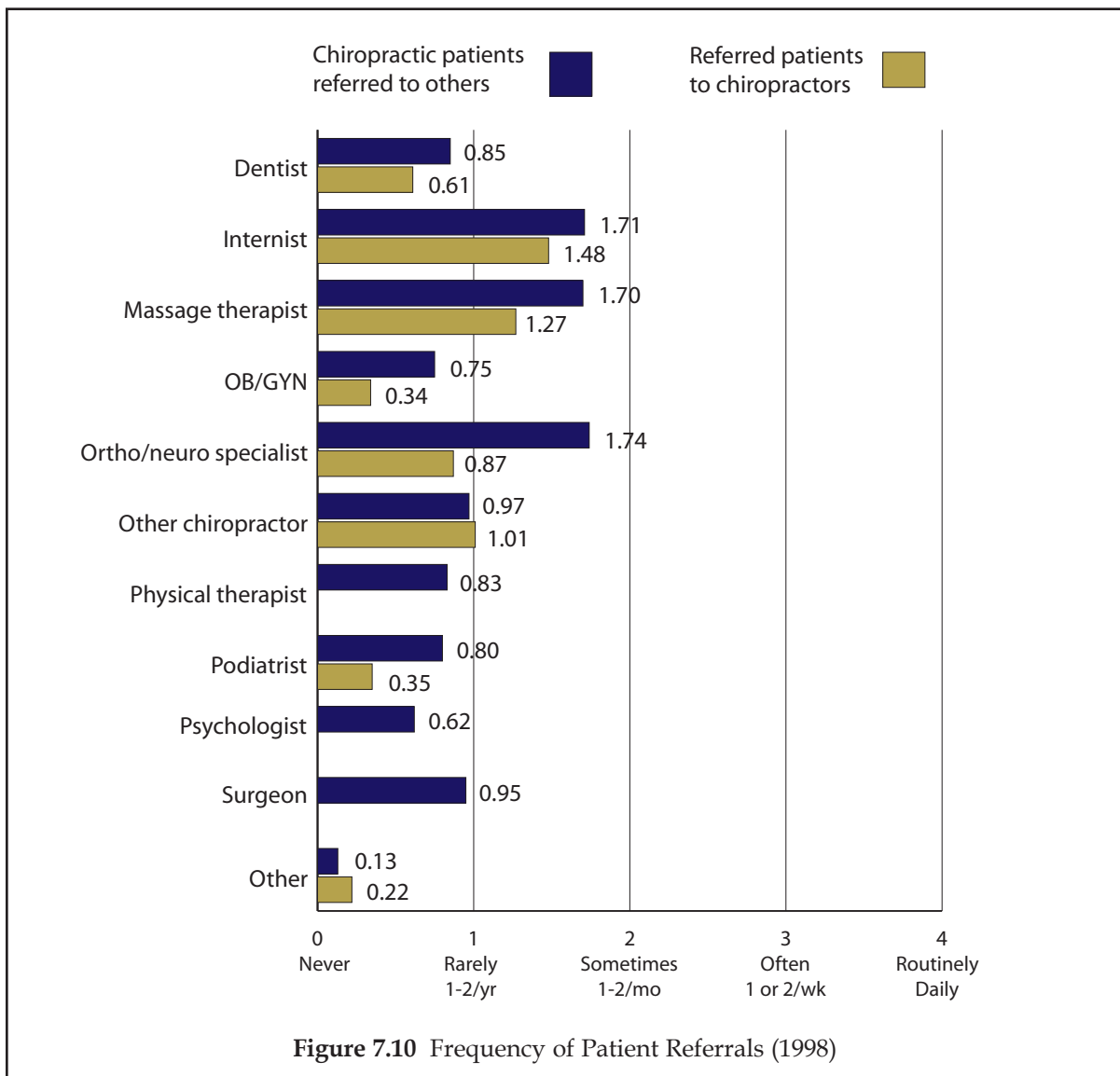
Delegation Procedures	1998 (yes)	2003 (yes)
Do you primarily delegate taking case histories to a chiropractic assistant?	8.4%	8.4%
Do you primarily delegate taking x-rays to a chiropractic assistant?	13.2%	10.9%
Do you primarily delegate developing x-rays to a chiropractic assistant?	34.8%	33.3%
Do you primarily delegate administration of adjunctive therapies to a chiropractic assistant?	41.1%	41.5%

Table 7.4 Office Procedures

Referrals

In the *Work Environment* section of the survey, participants were also asked if they had received any patient referrals in the past year from other health professionals. The survey instructed respondents to use a four-point scale to rate the frequency with which they received referrals and the frequency with which they referred patients to other practitioners. Compared to the 1998 survey, the 2003 survey contained an expanded list of health professions and a revised rating scale (see below Figure 7.10 and Figure 7.11). Nearly all respondents (98.7%) indicated that they had received referrals from other practitioners.

- Chiropractors most frequently receive referrals from massage therapists and family practitioners.
- Chiropractors most frequently refer patients to massage therapists, family practitioners, and orthopedists/neurologists.



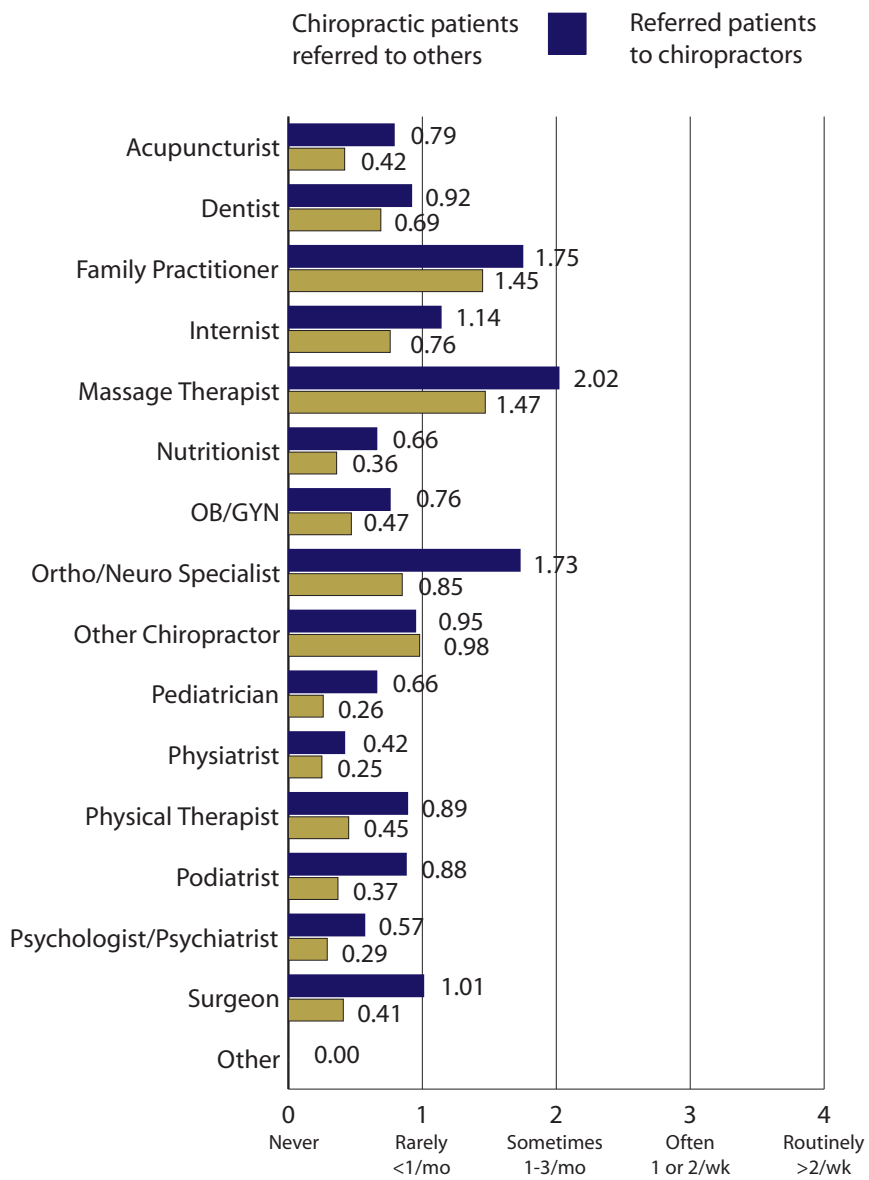


Figure 7.11 Frequency of Patient Referrals (2003)

Experience and Orientation

This section of the survey addressed the areas of pre- and post-licensure training, continuing education activities, and general components of chiropractic practice.

Length of Practice

Although the question to which respondents reported their years in practice was located in the *Demographic Data* section of the 2003 survey, it appeared in the *Experience and Orientation* section of previous surveys; therefore, that data is reported here for consistency.

The trend of the past 12 years is that the average length of years in practice for full-time chiropractic practitioners has increased. In 1991, 18.3% of respondents reported fewer than five years in practice while more than half (57.1%) had been in practice for 5 to 15 years, and just one-fourth (24.6%) had been in practice for more than 15 years. The 2003 survey data reveal that only 10.2% of respondents reported fewer than five years in practice (significantly, just 1.9% of respondents reported being in practice fewer than two years), 42.3% reported being in practice for 5 to 15 years, and nearly one half (47.5%) have been in practice for over 15 years (Table 7.5).

Length of Practice	1991	1998	2003
Fewer than two years	4.1%	7.0%	1.9%
2-4 years	14.2%	11.3%	8.3%
5-15 years	57.1%	46.6%	42.3%
16-25 years	24.6%	25.2%	32.1%
More than 25 years		9.9%	15.4%

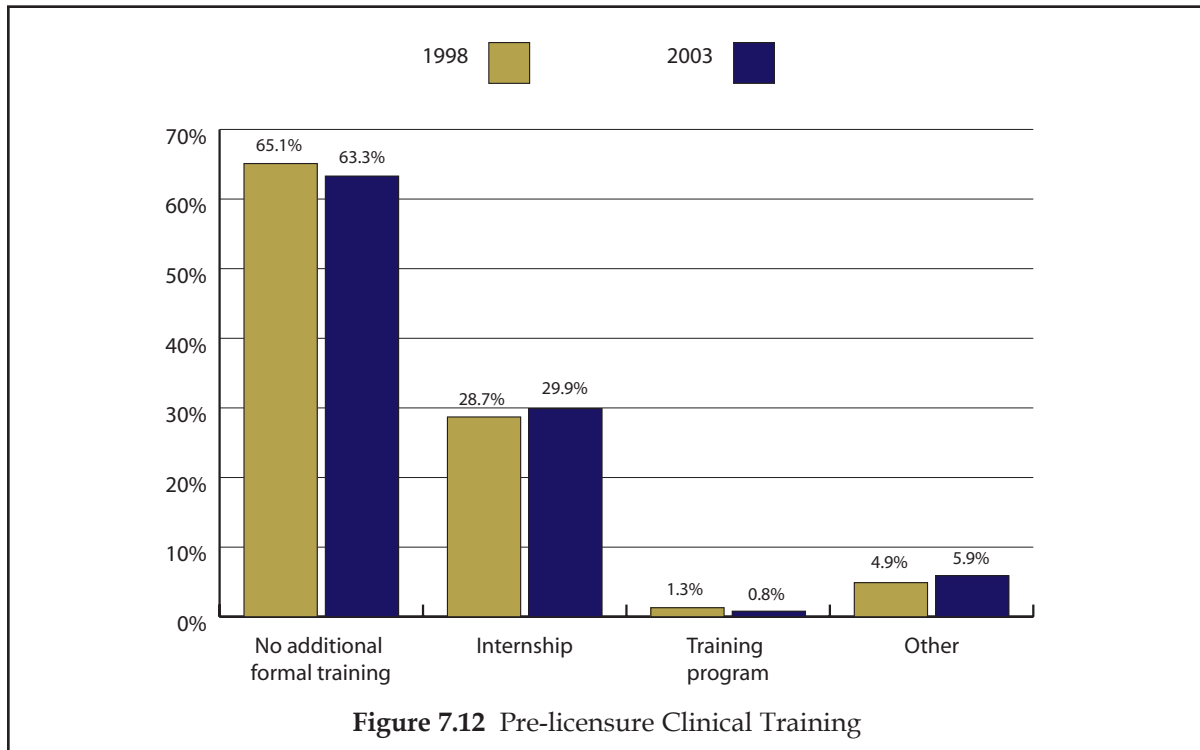
Table 7.5 Length of Practice

Clinical Orientation

The 1998 and 2003 NBCE survey respondents were asked to describe their pre- and post-licensure clinical training by selecting from lists of options. While the 1991 survey included the questions on post-licensure training, it did not include questions about pre-licensure training. For pre-licensure training, respondents were asked what professional orientation they had received beyond college experience. Concerning post-licensure clinical training, respondents indicated the level of training they received in their first field practice setting (Figure 7.12 and Figure 7.13). The 1998 and 2003 responses to the questions on pre-licensure training showed only minor differences. The responses to the post-licensure training questions reveal that more practitioners participated in associateships, and fewer had no additional formal training in their first post-licensure field practice experience than previously.

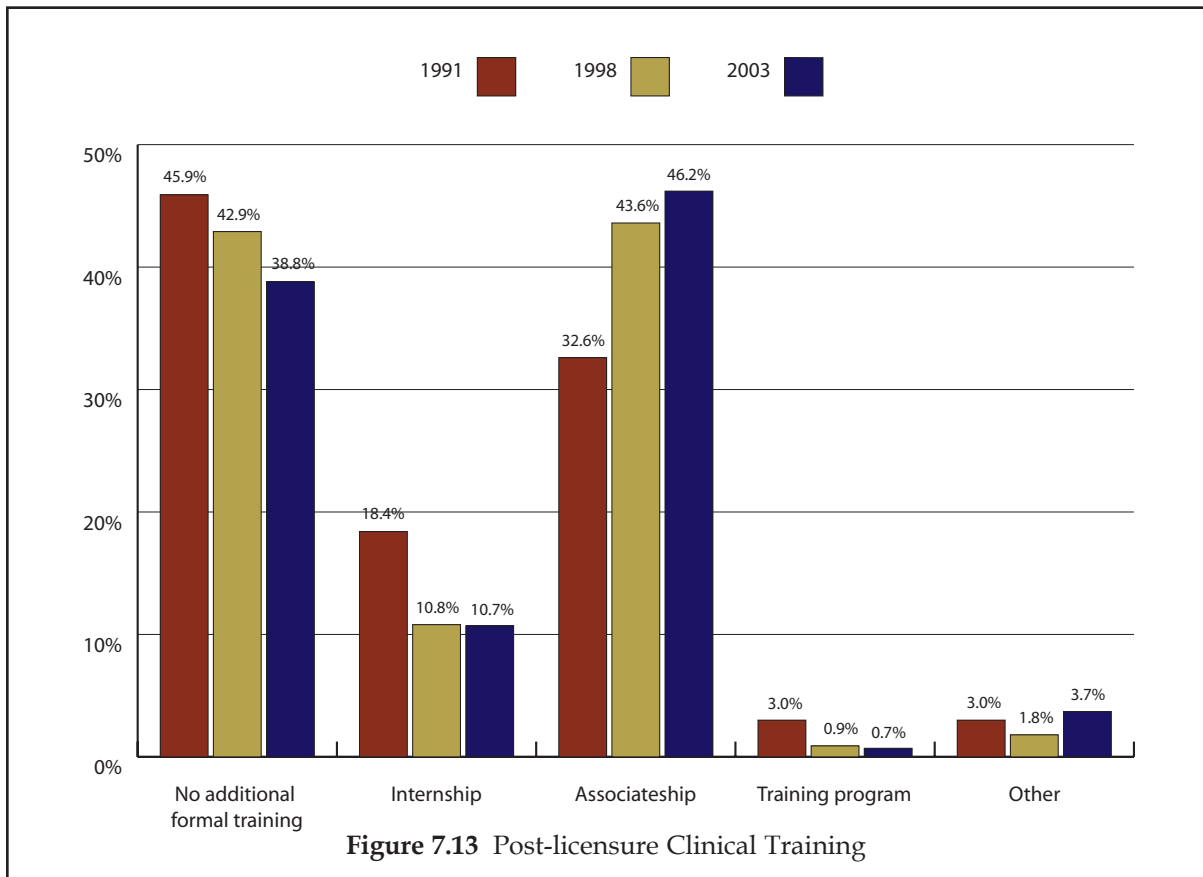
Pre-licensure

- 63.3% had no additional formal pre-licensure training compared to 65.1% in 1998.
- Nearly 30% (29.9%) had participated in a preceptorship or field internship prior to licensure, compared to 28.7% in 1998.
- A small portion had fulfilled a state-mandated training program as additional pre-licensure training, 0.8% versus 1.3% in 1998.



Post-licensure

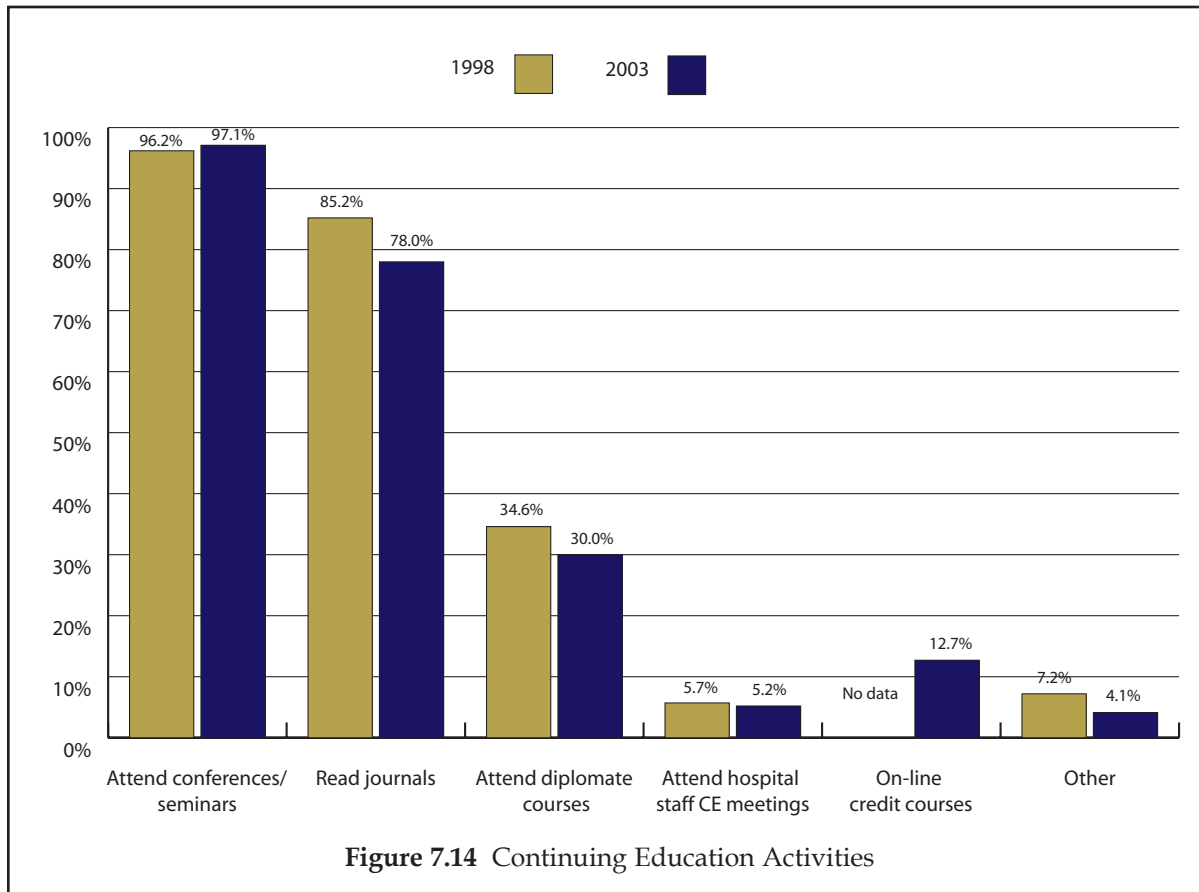
- 38.8% of respondents received no additional post-licensure training.
- A larger portion (46.2%) of respondents to the 2003 survey had completed an associateship, compared to 43.6% in 1998 and 32.6% in 1991.
- Of the remaining post-licensure responses, 10.7% had completed a field internship, and 0.7% had fulfilled a state-mandated training program. Both are similar to 1998, but less than in 1991.



Continuing Education Activities

Respondents were asked to answer two questions with regard to their continuing education activities: “In which continuing education opportunities do you participate?” and “How many hours of continuing education units have you earned during the past year?” (Figure 7.14). Continuing education activities consisted of the following:

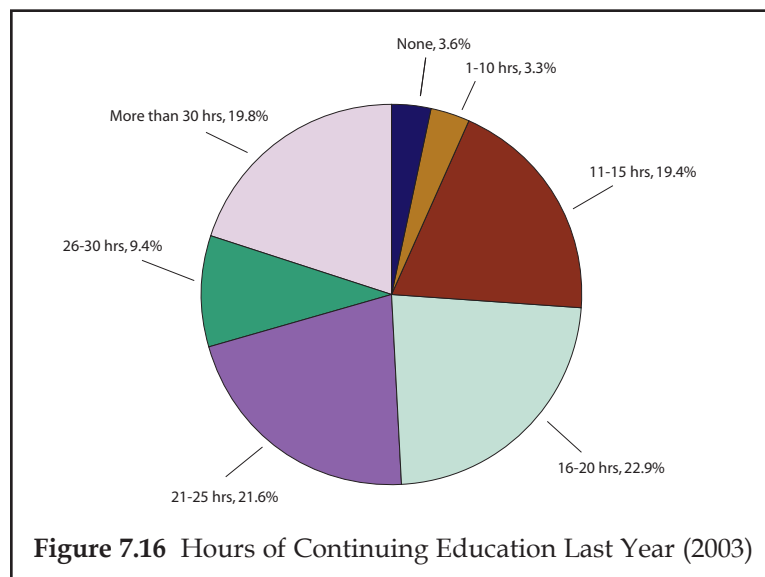
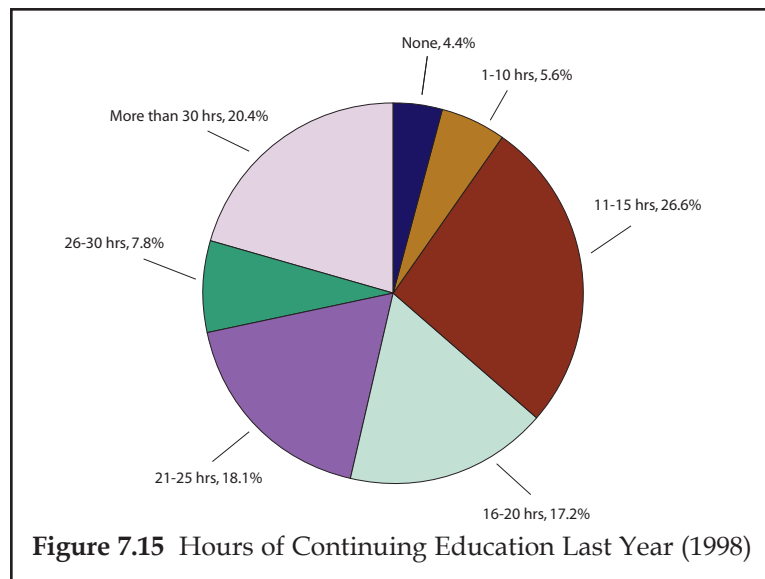
- Chiropractic practitioners primarily continue their professional education by attending conferences and seminars (97.1%) and reading journals (78.0%).
- 30% of chiropractic practitioners attend diplomate courses to continue their education, and 5.2% attend hospital staff meetings.
- 12.7% respondents indicated that they had participated in online credit courses; this was not a response option in 1998.



Continuing Education Hours

Respondents to the 1998 and 2003 NBCE surveys were asked to indicate the number of continuing education hours they had completed during the previous year. The 2003 data reveal that chiropractors took more units of continuing education than previously (Figure 7.15 and Figure 7.16).

- One-fifth of respondents (19.4%) had completed 11 to 15 hours.
- 22.9% of respondents had completed 16 to 20 hours.
- One-fifth (21.6%) of respondents had completed 21 to 25 hours.
- A smaller portion (9.4%) of respondents had completed 26 to 30 hours.
- One-fifth (19.8%) had completed more than 30 hours.



Components of Chiropractic Practice

The *Experience and Orientation* section also addressed the time committed to various functions associated with a chiropractic office. Direct patient care, documentation of care, business management including marketing, and patient education were rated in 2003. The 1998 survey also included a separate rating for marketing and one for research (Figure 7.17 and Figure 7.18).

According to respondents, a typical chiropractor spends occupational time accordingly:

- 52.9% with direct patient care;
- 18.9% with care documentation;
- 15.1% with patient education;
- 13.2% with business management.

