

JOB ANALYSIS OF CHIROPRACTIC IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

A project report, survey analysis,
and summary of the practice of chiropractic
within Australia and New Zealand



Funded, Conducted and Published by the

**NATIONAL BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS
INTERNATIONAL DIVISION**

901 54th Avenue • Greeley, Colorado • (303) 356-9100

1994

National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

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ISBN 1-884457-03-7

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Acknowledgments

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners wishes to express appreciation to Mark Christensen, Ph.D., and members of the NBCE Steering and Advisory committees, who helped guide the NBCE Job Analysis of Chiropractic project from its inception. Appreciation is also extended to those doctors of chiropractic who contributed their time, expertise, and feedback to early versions of the survey instrument, and to the 469 Australian and 70 New Zealand chiropractors who completed the final *Survey of Chiropractic Practice* for Australia or New Zealand.

In addition, thanks are expressed to Paul Townsend, D.C., for his contribution to the research and development of the survey instrument, and for other contributions to the study. Special appreciation is expressed to Delle Morgan, Sally Fetters and Yvonne Sieve for their roles in the writing, editing, and desktop publishing of this report; to Debora Beeman for her assistance and support; and to grammarian Miriam Marshall, and Executive Assistant Sharon Crowell for their valued critiques at various stages of the production. Special appreciation is also expressed to Jim zumBrunnen for his statistical assistance.

The NBCE would also like to thank Professor Andries M. Kleynhans, D.C., Head, School of Chiropractic and Osteopathy at the RMIT University, James W. Stinear, D.C., Executive Director of the New Zealand Chiropractors' Association, and Stephen Bardsley, D.C. Executive Secretary of the Australasian Council for Chiropractic Education, for their support and assistance throughout the project. Additional thanks are extended to numerous examining board officials in Australia and New Zealand whose participation and support enabled the completion of this project.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank Hideg Jr." with a period at the end.

Frank G. Hideg, Jr., D.C., President
National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

PREFACE

Presented in this *Survey of Chiropractic Practice in Australia and New Zealand* are analyzed data collected by the United States National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE), assisted by the Australasian Council for Chiropractic Education (ACCE) and the School of Chiropractic and Osetopathy at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University).

As a well-established independent testing agency, the NBCE applied proven testing industry guidelines throughout each phase of this survey project, called a job analysis. In doing so, we sought to provide the chiropractic profession in Australia and New Zealand with the most credible, relevant, and accurate reference possible, one which documents chiropractic as it is practiced as a full-time profession.

These objectives have been met through the collective effort of many individuals. Members of our staff, members of the NBCE Job Analysis Steering and Job Analysis Advisory Committees, members of the ACCE, RMIT and private practitioners, statisticians, editors, and other professionals. A gratifying survey response from members of the profession served to further validate the survey's statistical data base.

It is this commitment to excellence that distinguishes our profession, and makes this report one which may have far-reaching significance in chiropractic health care in Australia and New Zealand for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Mark G. Christensen, Ph.D.

Director of Testing

National Board of Chiropractic Examiners

“ ... we sought to provide the chiropractic profession in Australia and New Zealand with the most credible, relevant, and accurate reference possible, one which documents chiropractic as it is practiced as a full-time profession.”

Introduction

The chronology of testing and measurement can be traced to the beginning of recorded history. Such early writings describe rituals that gauged the wisdom, physical endurance or bravery of various tribal members.

At one time or another, through one form or another, humankind has always devised a means of studying the world in which we live. We observe and surmise, prove and disprove, amass and dissect. We measure, we document and we formulate principles upon which scientific and sociological changes sometimes come to be based.

Over the years, as the consequences of studies have become more weighty and the procedures and results increasingly scrutinized, strict guidelines for obtaining the maximum in testing validity and consistency were developed. Today, these guidelines are established and refined by various independent testing organizations and national governments throughout the world.

Although there could be no “right” or “wrong” answers to the survey which formed the basis of this report, the testing and measurement guidelines followed were necessary to obtain valid and reliable data. In short, only through strict adherence to government and industry guidelines can a survey project, such as this job analysis, gain the desired validity and credibility. In its role as a national and international testing agency for the chiropractic profession, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) in the United States adheres to these guidelines, which enable testing agencies to prepare and administer fair, uniform, and valid tests and measurements.

In addition to the NBCE job analyses performed in United States, Australia, and New Zealand, a similar study was also conducted by the NBCE in Canada, at the request of the chiropractic leadership in that country. The NBCE funded, conducted and reported the *Job Analysis of Chiropractic* projects as a service to the chiropractic profession.

Organization of the Report

While compiling data from the NBCE *Job Analysis of Chiropractic in Australia and New Zealand*, the authors were committed to providing comprehensive and accurate documentation of every aspect of the job analysis project. Repeatedly surfacing during the compilation process was the reminder that the readership of the

report might well include individuals with a wide range of backgrounds and purposes, and with varying degrees of familiarity with the fields of chiropractic and/or testing and measurement. This prevailing awareness affected the construction of the report in both content and format.

At every step, the authors presented the relevant data, then stepped back to assess whether the body of information offered previously in the text was sufficient to afford and facilitate comprehension by a full range of readers. In many cases, the authors resolved this question by including clarifying background information which had been presumed unnecessary at the outset of the project.

Additionally entering into the decision to include some passages of text was the need to acquaint the reader with the registered practitioner of chiropractic, since it was this individual who provided the data upon which the job analysis report is based. Thus, the authors and editors have attempted to present an objective and well-rounded picture of the present-day chiropractor and his/her practice. Also addressed are the historical background of the profession and current information including academic requirements for becoming a registered chiropractor.

Readers will note that this publication is separated into four main sections, as indicated by vertical tab headings along the page edges. **Section I** contains general information relative to both Australia and New Zealand, and to the profession of chiropractic. **Section II** focuses on survey response data from Australia and its states. **Section III** addresses response data specific to New Zealand. **Section IV** includes the Epilogue and Appendices.

Throughout the publication, information was presented chronologically in general terms, followed by a more detailed topical discussion. Information was conveyed through visual means where appropriate.

The first two chapters serve to familiarize the reader with chiropractic* and its practitioners, including the personal, educational, and professional criteria these individuals met in becoming *registered practitioners of chiropractic*. Also presented briefly is a summary of major government inquiries, studies, or rulings conducted in recent years relative to chiropractic. By providing the information in these chapters, the authors demonstrate why the chiropractic practitioner -- and only the chiropractic practitioner -- is qualified to provide the data which forms the job analysis of chiropractic.

Chapter 3 provides background information relative to the regulation of occupational registration in Australia and New Zealand. The reader is acquainted with registration and certification testing, as well as the legal aspects that shape regulatory

* "Chiropractic" is generally used as a noun, although it may appear to be an adjective in many contexts.

agency requirements. In addition, a brief summary of the chiropractic registration requirements for each state/territory is presented.

In chapter 4 are the procedures followed in the development of the survey instrument. This chapter discusses the process of planning, development, and research protocols observed in the job analysis project, from committees to field tests to the gathering of data, and to the design of the final survey.

Chapter 5 describes the method and factors utilized in compiling the survey mailing list, tracking all components, tabulating the data, etc. Additionally, a number of steps were taken to encourage a high rate of response which enhances the validity of study data. These steps are presented in this chapter.

Chapters 6-9 provide an overview of the Australian respondent chiropractors, their corresponding patient demographics, and respondent comments as written on the survey form. Included is a summary of characteristics of the “typical” chiropractic practitioner and patient. Also addressed in these chapters are conditions, adjustive and non-adjustive treatment techniques, and activities performed by the practitioners, their estimation of frequency of performance, and their perceived risk to patient welfare should the activity be omitted or performed poorly.

Chapter 10 presents a breakdown of Australian survey data by state and territory. Except where indicated, the data in Chapter 10 appear in *unweighted* form.

Chapters 11-14 follow the same format for New Zealand as Chapters 6-9; however, all of the New Zealand data are unweighted.

Included in the Appendices are relevant forms and correspondence, the Survey of Chiropractic Practice as administered in Australia and New Zealand, a glossary of terms, an index, and a listing of both Australian and New Zealand survey participants.

* * *