

Chapter 7

The Chiropractic Practitioner

The first section of the 1998 Job Analysis Survey 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 return the survey without filling it out. Respondents next answered questions regarding personal demographic characteristics, elements of managed care, type of work environment, and practitioner experience.

Eighty-eight percent (88.3%) of respondents reported their practice as full-time compared to 81.5% in the previous 1991 Job Analysis Survey (Figure 7.1).

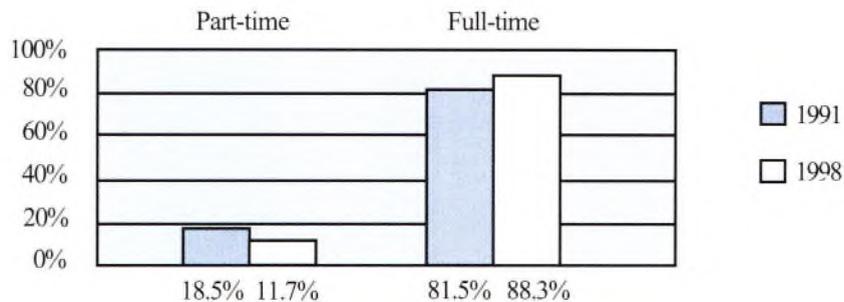
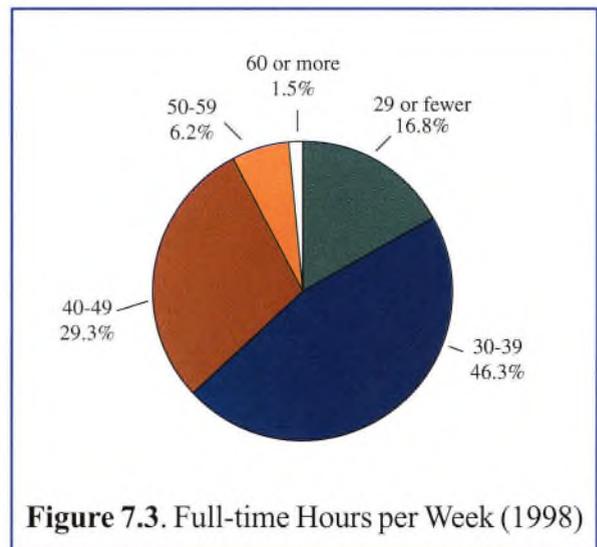
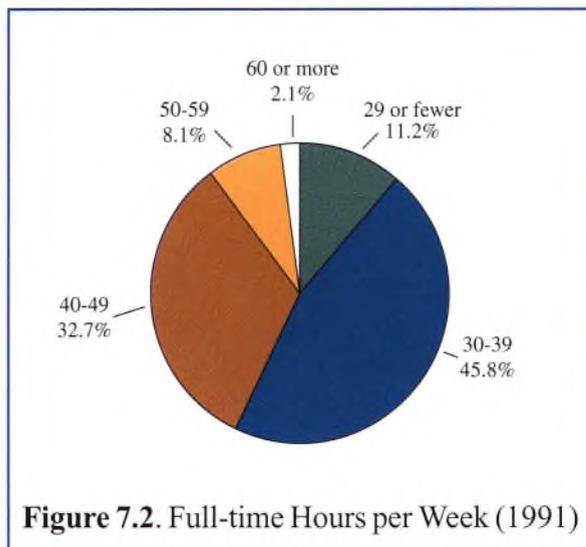


Figure 7.1. Full-time and Part-time Practice

Full-time respondents indicated the average number of hours per week they devoted to their practice. Nearly half (46.3%) of chiropractors work 30-39 hours per week, while 29.3% work 40-49 hours per week (Figure 7.2 and Figure 7.3). These 1998 survey results showed that the hours devoted to practice were similar to the 1991 survey.



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 1998 Job Analysis Survey data, 80.8% of chiropractic practitioners are male, and 19.2% are female. In comparison to the NBCE 1991 Job Analysis Survey, the percentage of female chiropractors has increased 6% (Figure 7.4). 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, 19).

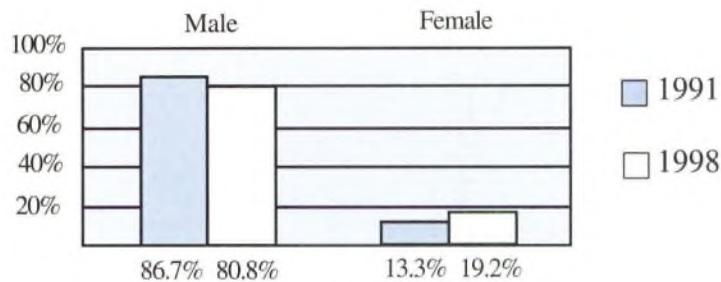


Figure 7.4. Practitioner Gender

Ethnicity

- Regarding practitioner ethnicity, the NBCE 1998 Job Analysis Survey found that 93.5% of chiropractors are Caucasian, down 2% from the 1991 survey.
- Asian, African American, Hispanic, Native American, and other ethnicities comprise the remaining 6.5%. Since 1991, the percentages of Asian and Native American chiropractors have increased (Table 7.1).

<i>Ethnic Origin of Respondents</i>		
	<i>1991</i>	<i>1998</i>
Asian	0.8%	1.8%
African American	0.5%	0.6%
Caucasian	95.5%	93.5%
Hispanic	1.6%	1.7%
Native American	0.2%	0.8%
Other	1.2%	1.6%

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 (Figure 7.5).

- 5.0% of respondents have master's degrees, and 2.3% have doctorates.
- Over half (53.8%) of chiropractic practitioners have bachelor's degrees. Compared to the 1991 survey data, the portion of chiropractors with bachelor's degrees has increased 7.3%.
- One-fifth (21.4%) of chiropractic practitioners have an associate's degree, and 13.2% have a high school diploma.

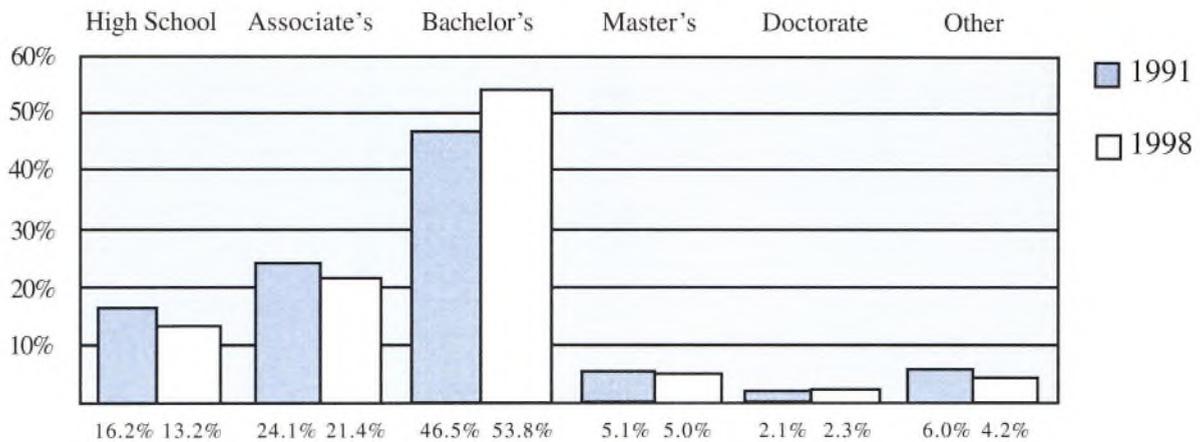


Figure 7.5. Non-chiropractic Education

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, 61.5% have no diplomate status or equivalent specialty certification, while 24.9% indicated that they have worked toward diplomate status. The remaining 13.6% have diplomate status or equivalent.

Chiropractic Colleges Represented

Respondents were asked to indicate the college from which they received their Doctor of Chiropractic degree. Over one-fourth (26.0%) of respondents received their chiropractic degree from one of the two Palmer colleges, and 14.9% 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).

<i>College</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>1991</i>	<i>1998</i>
Anglo-European Coll. of Chiropractic Dorset, England	0.0%	0.1%	Palmer College of Chiropractic Davenport, Iowa	27.7%	22.3%
Canadian Memorial Chiropractic Coll. Ontario, Canada	0.1%	0.2%	Palmer West College of Chiropractic San Jose, California	2.2%	3.7%
Cleveland Chiropractic College Kansas City, Missouri	3.9%	3.5%	Parker College of Chiropractic Dallas, Texas	0.7%	3.1%
Cleveland Chiropractic College Los Angeles, California	3.5%	2.9%	Pennsylvania College of Chiropractic Horsham, Pennsylvania	0.8%	0.7%
Institut Francais de Chiropractic Paris, France	0.0%	0.0%	Royal Melbourne Inst. of Technology Victoria, Australia	0.0%	0.0%
Life University Marietta, Georgia	9.0%	12.3%	So. California College of Chiropractic Pico Rivera, California	0.3%	1.0%
Life Chiropractic College West San Lorenzo, California	1.3%	2.6%	Sherman Coll. of Straight Chiropractic Spartanburg, South Carolina	2.9%	1.7%
Lincoln College of Chiropractic Indianapolis, Indiana	no data	0.6%	Sydney College of Chiropractic Sydney, Australia	0.0%	0.0%
Logan College of Chiropractic Chesterfield, Missouri	8.0%	8.4%	University of Bridgeport Bridgeport, Connecticut	N/A	0.2%
Los Angeles College of Chiropractic ² Whittier, California	6.6%	7.5%	Texas Chiropractic College Pasadena, Texas	3.5%	4.3%
National College of Chiropractic Lombard, Illinois	11.6%	9.2%	Western States Chiropractic College Portland, Oregon	3.2%	3.7%
New York Chiropractic College Seneca Falls, New York	7.4%	7.3%	University of Quebec at Trois-Rivieres Quebec, Canada	N/A	no data
Northwestern College of Chiropractic Bloomington, Minnesota	4.5%	4.5%	Other	2.8%	0.5%

Table 7.2. Chiropractic Colleges Represented in the Survey Sample

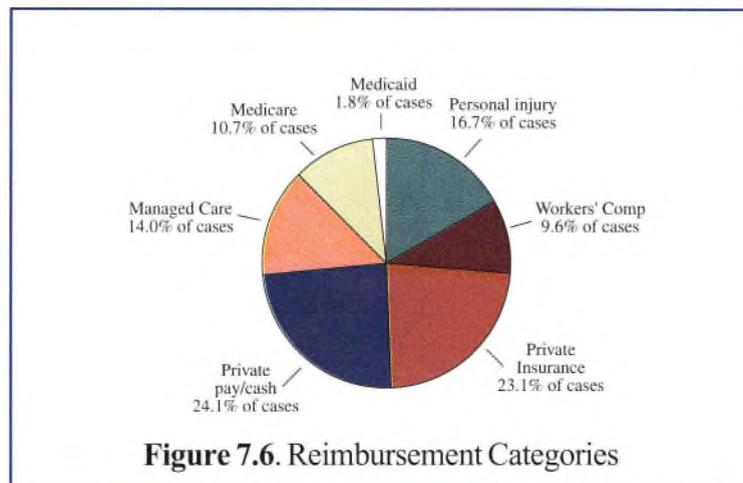
¹ "No data" in place of a value for particular institutions in Table 7.2 denotes data were not obtained for that institution at the time of the survey. "N/A" denotes the program did not exist when data were obtained.

² Now called the Southern California University of Health Sciences.

Coverage of Chiropractic Care

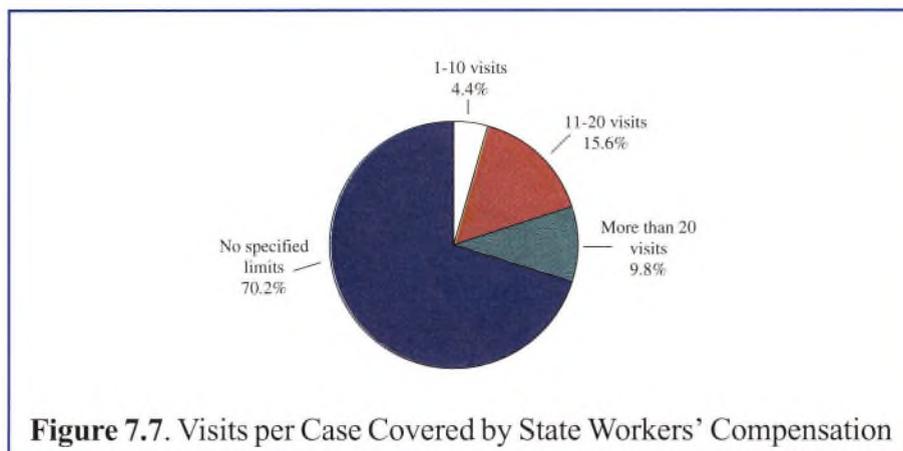
The *Workers' Compensation, Managed Care, and Insurance* section of the 1998 Job Analysis Survey addressed types and percentages of reimbursement for chiropractic services, membership in managed care programs, and Medicare/Medicaid coverage. First, practitioners were asked to indicate the percentage of cases per year that were covered by particular types of payment (such as private pay or Medicare) (Figure 7.6).

- Private insurance covered about one-fourth (23.1%) of cases per year.
- Private pay/cash covered about one-fourth (24.1%) of cases per year.
- Managed care covered 14.0% of cases per year.
- Medicare covered 10.7% of cases per year; Medicaid covered 1.8% of cases per year.
- Of the remainder of cases, 16.7% were Personal Injury, and 9.6% were Workers' Compensation claims.



Workers' Compensation

Ninety-seven percent of respondents indicated that their state workers' compensation laws covered chiropractic care; 87.5% indicated that adjunctive therapies are also covered; and 70.3% of the respondents indicated that their state laws imposed no specific limits on the number of visits allowed (Figure 7.7).



Managed Care

Respondents answered the question, “In how many managed care programs are you a member?” Seventy percent (70.2%) indicated that they participated in one or more managed care programs (Figure 7.8).

- 43.6% indicated participation in one to five programs.
- 14.1% participated in six to ten programs.
- 12.5% were members of more than ten programs.
- 29.8% did not participate in managed care.

Respondents were asked if they had ever been denied membership as a health care provider in a managed care program. Over half (51.9%) of respondents indicated that they had been denied membership. If they had been denied membership, respondents were asked how many times they had been denied (Figure 7.9). For those who had been denied membership, 44.2% had been denied two to three times. Respondents were also asked to indicate the reasons managed care membership had been denied:

- The majority of respondents (83.7%) had been denied because the plan had met its membership quota, and 32.2% had been denied because the plan did not accept chiropractors.
- Nearly one-fifth (19.5%) of respondents had been denied membership because the plan did not include chiropractic coverage.
- 8.6% of respondents were denied membership because they did not meet the program’s credentialing requirements.

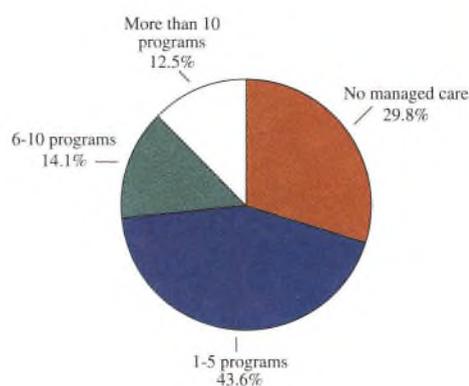


Figure 7.8. Managed Care Membership

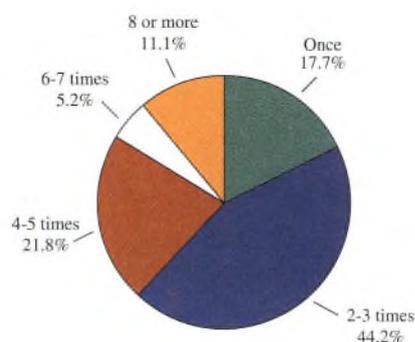


Figure 7.9. Program Memberships Denied

Medicaid

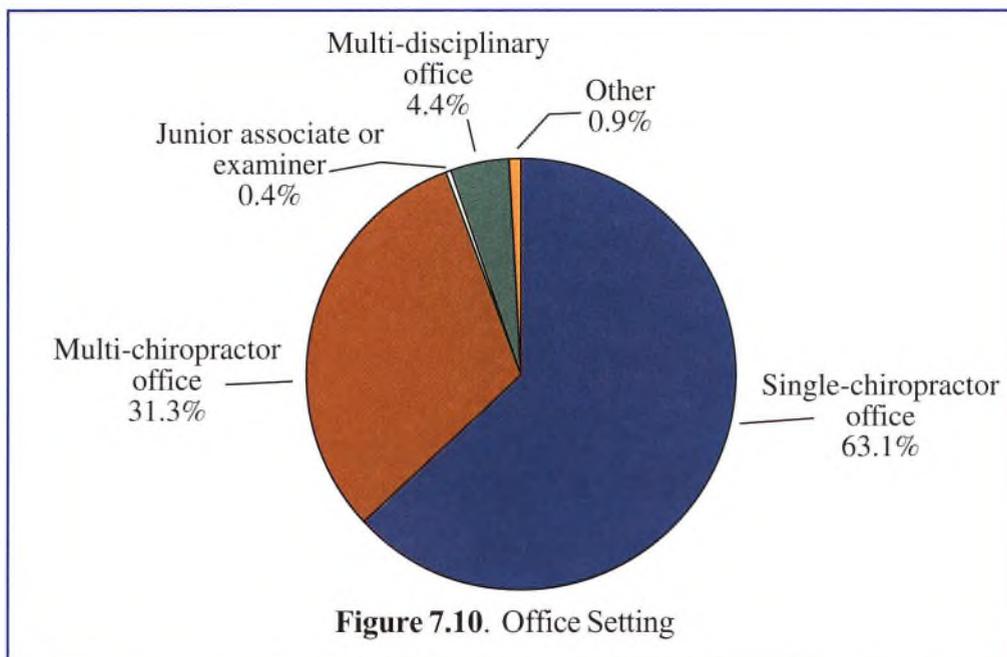
Nearly seventy percent (69.9%) of survey respondents indicated that their state includes chiropractic coverage under Medicaid or state aid. Of those practitioners whose states covered chiropractic, 45.7% participated in their state's program.

The Chiropractic Work Environment

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

Office Setting

- The majority (63.1%) of those participating in the 1998 survey indicated that they practiced in a setting in which they were the only doctor in the office (Figure 7.10). The 1991 Job Analysis Survey found that approximately two-thirds of chiropractors worked in a one-doctor office setting, indicating no substantial changes in the proportion of doctors working in a multi-practitioner or multidisciplinary setting.
- Nearly one-third (31.3%) of respondents share an office with one or more other chiropractors.
- A small proportion (4.4%) of respondents practice in multidisciplinary offices.
- A few chiropractors work as junior associates/examining doctors (0.4%) or work in other office arrangements (0.9%).



- Of the 1998 survey respondents, 12.2% practice in more than one office location, representing a slight increase from 1991 (Table 7.3).
- Additionally, 61.3% of chiropractic practitioners deliver chiropractic care outside an office setting, revealing a 10.7% decrease from the 1991 percentage.
- The percentage of chiropractic practitioners who have staff privileges at a medical or osteopathic hospital has essentially remained stable (4.9% in 1991 vs 5.2% in 1998).

<i>Office Location</i>	<i>Yes 1991</i>	<i>Yes 1998</i>
Do you practice in more than one office location?	10.1%	12.2%
Do you ever deliver chiropractic care outside an office setting, such as in a patient's home?	72.0%	61.3%
Do you have staff privileges at a medical or osteopathic hospital?	4.9%	5.2%

Table 7.3. Office Location

Office Procedures

The 1998 Job Analysis Survey included questions concerning the delegation of procedures that were not covered in the 1991 survey (Table 7.4).

- 41.1% of chiropractic practitioners primarily delegate the administration of physiotherapy to a chiropractic assistant.
- 8.4% of chiropractic practitioners delegate the taking of case histories to a chiropractic assistant.
- 13.2% of chiropractic practitioners delegate the taking of radiographs to a chiropractic assistant.
- One-third (34.8%) of chiropractic practitioners delegate the developing of radiographs to a chiropractic assistant.

<i>Delegation Procedures 1998</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Do you primarily delegate case history taking to a chiropractic assistant?	8.4%
Do you primarily delegate taking X-rays to a chiropractic assistant?	13.2%
Do you primarily delegate developing of X-rays to a chiropractic assistant?	34.8%
Do you primarily delegate the administration of physiotherapy to a chiropractic assistant?	41.1%

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 five-point scale to rate the frequency with which they received referrals and the frequency with which they referred patients to other practitioners (see below). The majority (91.8%) of respondents indicated that they had received referrals from other practitioners.

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

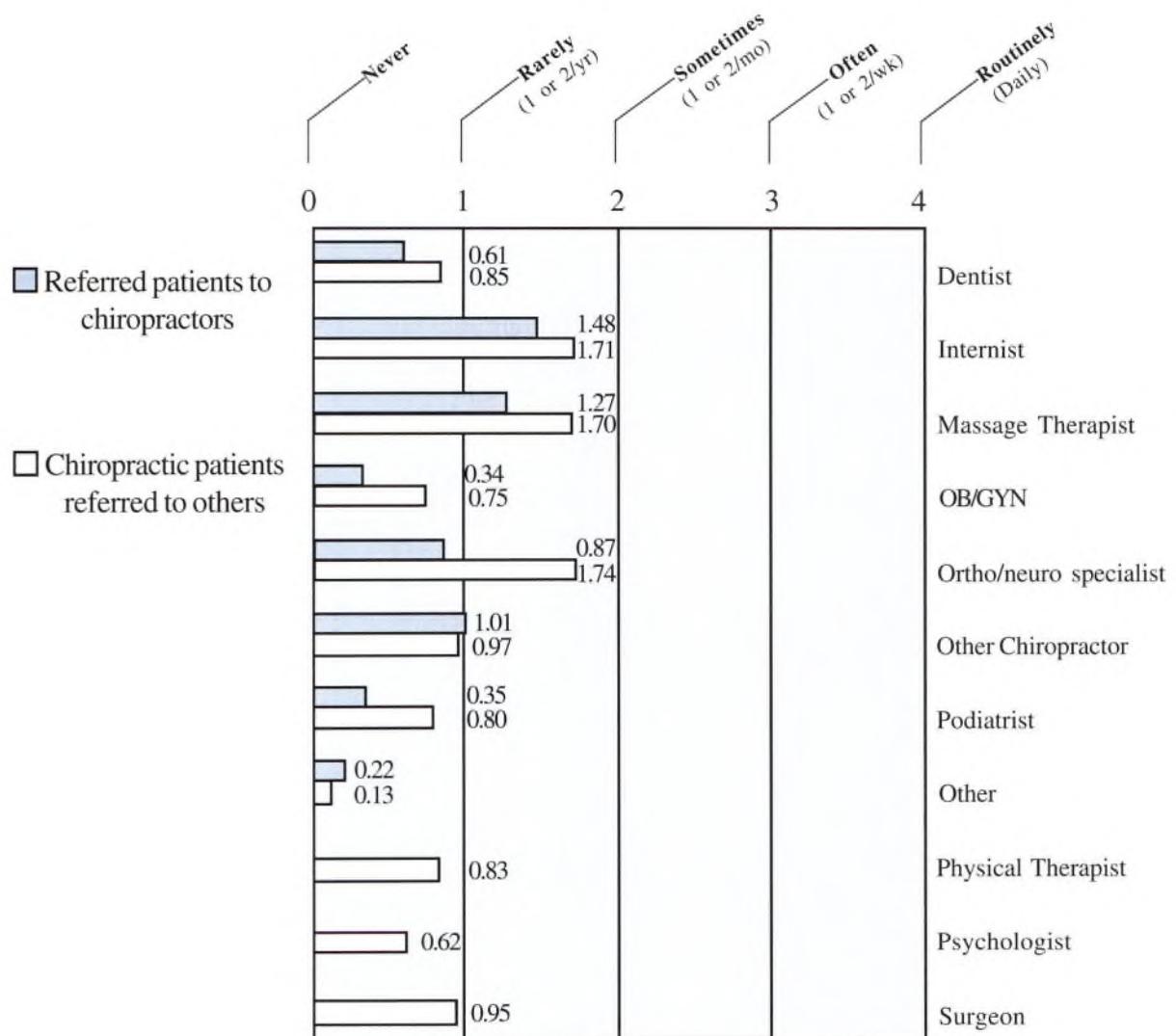


Figure 7.11. Frequency of Patient Referrals

Experience and Orientation

This section of the survey addressed the areas of licensure and length of practice and asked additional questions concerning chiropractic practitioners' orientation and professional experience.

Licensing and Length of Practice

- The majority (57.4%) of chiropractic practitioners hold only one state license.
- More than one-fourth of respondents (26.9%) hold two state licenses.
- 11.1% of respondents hold three state licenses.

Respondents were asked to indicate how long they had been practicing in their current locations and how long they had been practicing altogether. (This question in the 1998 survey was slightly modified from the 1991 survey, but the results were similar.) In 1991, more than half (54.8%) of chiropractic practitioners had been in practice for five to fifteen years, and the number in this category decreased slightly in 1998. The percentage of full-time chiropractors who have practiced more than fifteen years in their current location and who have practiced more than fifteen years altogether has increased from 22.4% and 24.6%, respectively, to 30.9% and 35.1% (Table 7.5).

Length of Practice	In Current Location		Altogether	
	1991	1998	1991	1998
Fewer than 2 years	6.0%	8.7%	4.1%	7.0%
2-4 years	16.7%	12.9%	14.2%	11.3%
5-15 years	54.8%	47.6%	57.1%	46.6%
16-25 years	22.4%	22.5%	24.6%	25.2%
More than 25 years		8.4%		9.9%

Table 7.5. Duration of Practice

Clinical Orientation

NBCE 1998 survey respondents were asked to describe their pre- and post-licensure clinical training by selecting from lists of options. 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).

Pre-licensure

- 65.1% had no additional formal pre-licensure training.
- More than one-fourth (28.7%) had participated in a preceptorship or field internship prior to licensure.
- A small portion (1.3%) had fulfilled a state-mandated training program as additional pre-licensure training.

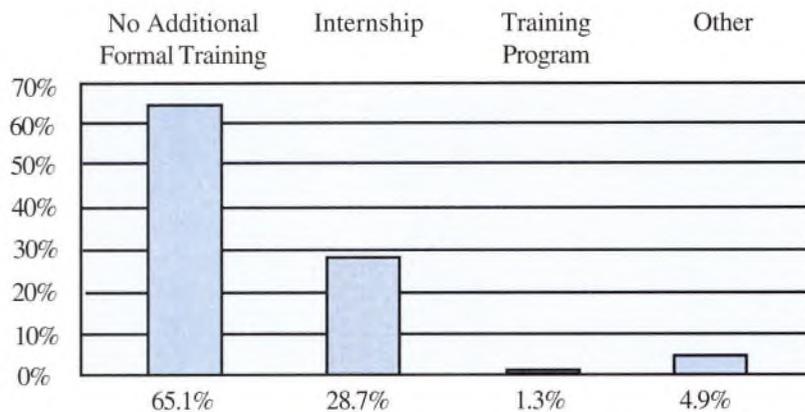


Figure 7.12. Pre-licensure Clinical Training

Post-licensure

- 42.9% of respondents received no additional post-licensure training.
- A larger portion (43.6%) of respondents to the 1998 survey had completed an associateship compared to 32.6% in 1991. All other categories had decreased.
- Of the remaining post-licensure responses, 10.8% had completed a field internship, and 0.9% had fulfilled a state-mandated training program.

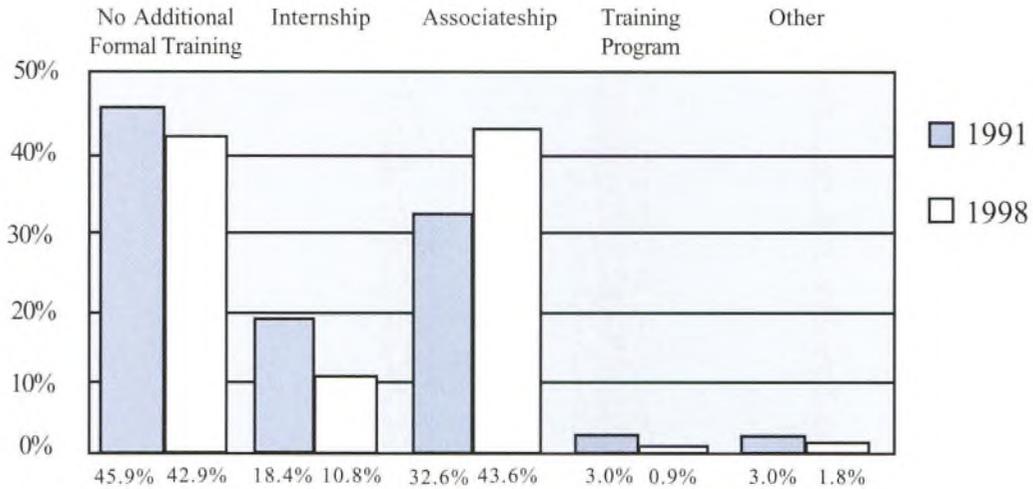


Figure 7.13. Post-licensure Training

Continuing Education Activities

Respondents were asked to answer two questions with regard to their continuing education activities: “What do you do to continue your education?” and “How many hours of continuing education units have you earned in the past year?” (Figure 7.14 and Figure 7.15). Continuing education activities consisted of the following:

- Chiropractic practitioners primarily continue their professional education by attending conferences and seminars (96.2%) and reading journals (85.2%).
- One-third (34.6%) of chiropractic practitioners attend diplomate courses to continue their education, and 5.7% attend hospital staff meetings.

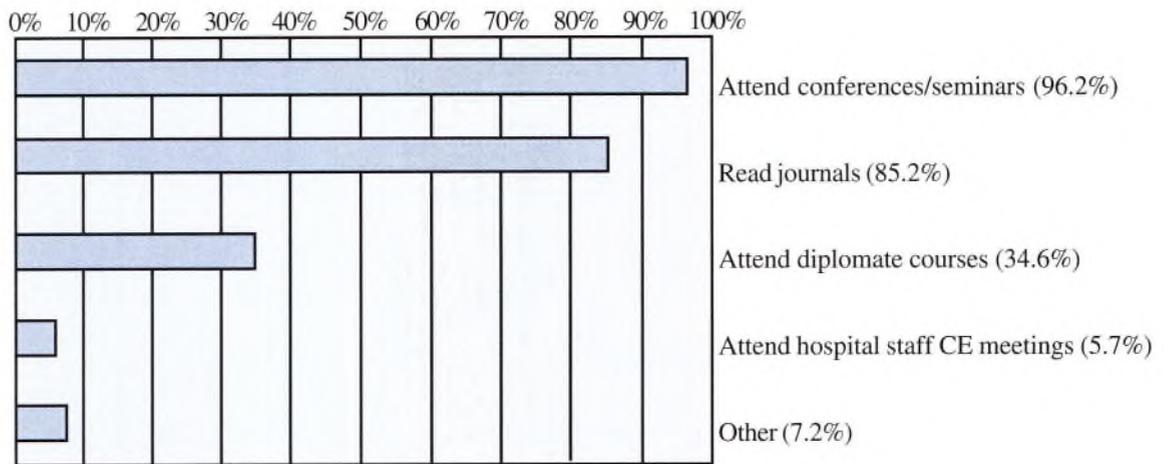
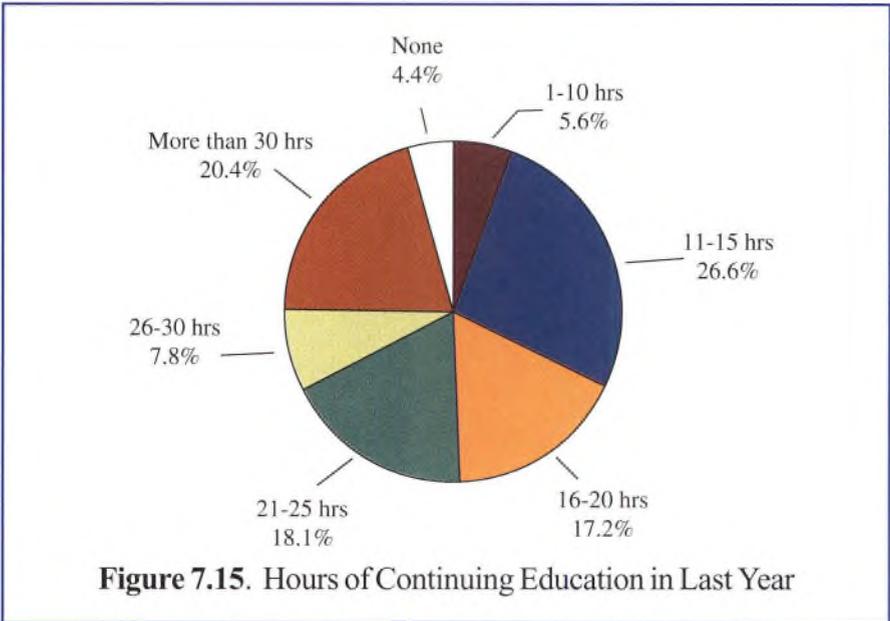


Figure 7.14. Continuing Education Activities

Continuing Education Hours

Hours of continuing education completed within the past year consisted of the following:

- One-fourth of respondents (26.6%) had completed 11-15 hours.
- 17.2% of respondents had completed 16-20 hours.
- Nearly one-fifth (18.1%) of respondents had completed 21-25 hours.
- A smaller portion (7.8%) of respondents had completed 26-30 hours.
- One-fifth (20.4%) had completed more than 30 hours.



Components of Chiropractic Practice

The last portion of the 1998 NBCE Job Analysis survey's *Practitioner Demographics* section addressed the time committed to various functions associated with a chiropractic office. Direct patient care, business management, insurance/managed care documentation, marketing, patient education, and college or other institution-based research were rated (Figure 7.16).

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

- 49.7% with direct patient care
- 15.3% with patient education
- 13.8% with insurance and managed care documentation
- 12.6% and with business management
- 7.2% with marketing
- 1.4% with professional research

