

115 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT 05633
TEL: (802) 828-2228
FAX: (802) 828-2424



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May 7, 2013

Mark Larson, Commissioner
Department of Vermont Health Access
312 Hurricane Lane, Suite 201
Williston, VT 05495

Dear Commissioner Larson:

The purpose of this letter is to express this Committee's interest in seeing DVHA consider the implementation of Medicaid coverage for clinically necessary health care services provided by a licensed chiropractic physician for treatment within a chiropractor's scope of practice.¹ Such coverage is already required of other health insurance policies under current state law. *See* 8 V.S.A. § 4088a.

As you know, Medicaid currently only covers spinal manipulation services provided by a licensed chiropractic physician. Spinal manipulation is only a small part of a chiropractor's scope of practice. In order to determine whether spinal manipulation is the proper treatment, a chiropractor must conduct an examination and make a diagnosis – procedures currently not covered by Medicaid. In effect, by limiting coverage to only spinal manipulation, patients that might benefit from chiropractic care, but who are unable to pay for the full office visit, are forced to see other providers whose services are covered.

The Committee hopes DVHA will consider this change.

Sincerely,

Rep. Michael Fisher, Chair
Committee on Health Care

¹ A chiropractor's "scope of practice" means:

. . . the diagnosis of human ailments and diseases related to subluxations, joint dysfunctions, neuromuscular and skeletal disorders for the purpose of their detection, correction, or referral in order to restore and maintain health, including pain relief, *without providing drugs or performing surgery*; the use of physical and clinical examinations, conventional radiologic procedures and interpretation, as well as the use of diagnostic imaging read and interpreted by a person so licensed and clinical laboratory procedures to determine the propriety of a regimen of chiropractic care; adjunctive therapies approved by the board, by rule, to be used in conjunction with chiropractic treatment; and treatment by adjustment or manipulation of the spine or other joints and connected neuromusculoskeletal tissues and bodily articulations. 26 V.S.A. § 521(3) (emphasis added).