

Canada's Impact on a Global Profession

An interview with Gerard Clum, DC

Dr. Gerard Clum, president of Life Chiropractic College West in the San Francisco Bay area, has also been president of the World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) for the past two years. As of June 7, 2008, Dr. Clum stepped down as WFC president, and Dr. Stathis Papadopolous of Cyprus was elected his successor. Canadian Chiropractor wishes Dr. Clum success in his future endeavours, and thanks him for joining us, in this issue, to discuss the profession's development globally, and Canada's role in this development.



Canadian Chiropractor: As immediate past president of the WFC, how would you describe the profession of chiropractic from a global perspective?

The World Federation of Chiropractic is completing its 20th year of activity in 2008. From the perspective of a 20-year window, the change in the growth, development and recognition of the profession, and the contribution of chiropractic care to the health and well-being of the people of the world, is nothing less than stunning! By every measure – from the organizational infrastructure of the profession, the educational institutions of the profession, the research efforts of the discipline and the distribution and prevalence of practising chiropractors – the growth of the profession has been explosive.

The expanding interface between the WFC and the World Health Organization (WHO) is a prime example of the recognition and impact of the profession at large. Following the WFC being admitted to official relations with the WHO – as a non-governmental organization (NGO) representing the chiropractic profession – a series of engagements ranging from the publication of the WHO Guidelines on the Basic Safety and Training in Chiropractic, and the upcoming Symposium on Manual Methods of Healthcare being co-ordinated by the WFC on behalf of the WHO in Beijing in late 2008, has followed. Earlier this year, the first ever chiropractic postdoctorate intern was named by the WHO Office of Traditional Medicine in Geneva, Switzerland.

Licensure, as it is known in the North American context, or registration as it is known around the world, has come to more countries in more regions than ever before within the past 20 years. Costa Rica (Central America), Thailand (Asia) and Italy (Europe) are among the recent entries to the regulated community of chiropractic. Similarly regional bodies representing the chiropractic profession such as the Latin American Federation of Chiropractic and the Asian Pacific Federation of Chiropractic are helping national associations to organize and increase their effectiveness in their particular regions.

Most chiropractors are surprised to learn that there are now chiropractic educational programs offering DC (or equivalent) curricula in Australia (three), New Zealand, Japan, Korea, Brazil (two), Mexico, South Africa (two), Denmark, France and Spain with the majority of these being offered in tertiary universities with governmental funding.

