

4-27-2021

To: Members of the Joint Standing Health and Human Services Committee

Re: LD 1553, An Act To Amend the Law Governing MaineCare Coverage of Chiropractic Treatment

Dear Members of the Committee,

Thank you Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the joint standing committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Dr. Daniel Myerowitz. I am a resident of Holden and a lifelong resident of the State of Maine. I am a third generation Doctor of Chiropractic, and I am now in my twelfth year of practice. I am President of the Maine Chiropractic Association and proud to be testifying on behalf of my patients in favor of this bill, which passed the 129th legislature before being left unfunded during appropriations due to other priorities.

“Loving service is my first technique.” Those words hang in the halls of Parker University, my alma mater. We learn over nine spinal manipulative techniques while in school, but those words mean my first and foremost technique as a Doctor of Chiropractic is to provide the best care I can for every person I treat. Beyond all else, they are not just a patient, but a person. It is not my job to merely treat a patient, but to care for them. I never imagined all of the roadblocks and complications that would present themselves in my journey to help sick people get well, especially those who need help the most.

Currently, MaineCare coverage is restricted for Doctors of Chiropractic to only spinal x-rays, spinal manipulation, and examinations. We are restricted from all other services that are well within our scope of practice and that we utilize on a daily basis. This includes physical modalities, therapies, exercise and movement education, and all treatment for extremities. These are services that are covered under the vast majority of commercial plans, and they are generally covered by MaineCare when performed by a physical therapist, medical and osteopathic physicians, but not by a chiropractor. This results in additional visits to other providers for services that could be performed at the same time in one office setting unnecessarily complicating patient care and increasing system costs.

This bill, when passed, will result in the following:

- 1) The MaineCare patient population will have greater access to safe, effective, and low cost care.
- 2) Patients with ankle or knee dysfunction that is directly affecting their low back will no longer be required to see another provider at the expense of another visit, another day off from work, and further transportation costs. This is the patient population that can least afford the expense of lost time from work. The system also benefits from the reduced cost of additional visits to other providers.
- 3) Doctors of Chiropractic would be able to utilize additional treatment methods (i.e. traction, soft tissue techniques, and electrical stimulation) that can greatly enhance the

chiropractic adjustment. This would allow for potentially faster results and fewer visits overall. Again, these services are already within our scope of practice and are covered when performed by other providers.

- 4) This bill will incentivize more chiropractors to enroll in MaineCare thereby greatly relieving the strain on a system that is experiencing a significant provider shortage, especially in rural areas. I have noticed patients with MaineCare coverage traveling from as far away as Machias to come to my office in Holden, which is a 90 minute drive.

Other states, most notably Missouri, have opened full access to chiropractors for their Medicaid population with the expectation of reduced health care costs as a result. We would be happy to provide the committee with some of the data that influenced their decision for the work session.

I thank you for your time and urge you to vote in favor of LD 1553.

Sincerely,

Daniel Myerowitz D.C., Dipl. Ac (AACA)
President, MCA