

EDITORIAL

WHAT IS THE ASSOCIATION OF CHIROPRACTIC COLLEGES EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE AND RESEARCH AGENDA CONFERENCE?

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Editor

ABSTRACT

This editorial presents a brief summary of the Association of Chiropractic Colleges Educational Conference and Research Agenda Conference (ACC-RAC) 2007, what it is and is not, and why one might wish to attend future ACC-RAC conferences. (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2007;30:249-250)

Now and then I receive e-mails from people asking about the “ACC-RAC” and if this conference is worth attending. Because the *JMPT* helps to disseminate information relating to research and education, I felt it appropriate to briefly address this particular conference, especially to share this information with those who have yet to attend it.

The “ACC-RAC” is a conference that has a big impact on the chiropractic profession. It is from a joint effort that the conference has achieved success and by which it derives its name: Association of Chiropractic Colleges Educational Conference and Research Agenda Conference (ACC-RAC). There are 2 subdivisions of the conference that are blended in such a seamless manner that most people are unaware that these 2 components exist (ACC and RAC, respectively). The conference planning committee is made up of representatives from these subsets in addition to other experts within and outside the field of chiropractic.

The RAC component of the conference focuses on the development of the research capacity of chiropractic science through plenary sessions and workshops. The presenters for these sessions are carefully selected and invited by the planning committee to present their panel or workshop information. These experts are selected based upon their area of knowledge and how they might contribute to the theme of the year’s conference or to the specific workshop topic. Workshops offer a wide variety of learning opportunities for attendees. A sample from the 2007 conference included these workshops: science behind the subluxation; clinical practice in an integrative environment; informed consent in practice—mandatory or just good practice?;

understanding and communicating the risk of manipulation to non-DCs; ethical considerations in clinical practice; and best practices management of the postsurgical spine.

The ACC component focuses on collaborative group meetings between the colleges and presentation of papers that have been submitted and chosen through a peer-reviewed selections process. The ACC Peer-review Committee performs an important function for the conference throughout the year. It reviews and selects only the best papers to be presented at the conference and these abstracts are published in the *Journal of Chiropractic Education* in the Spring issue. The long-range goals of the ACC Peer-review Committee are as follows: (1) maintain the scholarship of the presentations and integrity of the conference; (2) increase the quality of conference presentations; (3) increase the number of published papers as a result of the conference; (4) increase the number of experienced peer-reviewers; (5) provide scholarship opportunities for new peer-reviewers; and (6) provide mentorship and feedback to peer-reviewers and authors. In addition to selecting papers for presentation, the committee also selects the best award-winning papers, which will be published as full papers in future *JMPT* issues.

The scientific, peer-reviewed presentations have a wide variety of topics. Most of these presentations fall within 1 of 3 categories: basic sciences, clinical practice research, and educational research. For the clinical practitioner, interesting case presentations of unusual conditions or unique treatment methods for treating common conditions may be offered. **Table 1** provides a sample of the peer-reviewed studies that were presented at the 2007 conference.

Who should consider attending the ACC-RAC conference? My answer includes the following: those interested in the most current and up-to-date information relating to the chiropractic profession, those who enjoy learning about new

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Table 1. A small sample of questions that may have been answered if you had attended the peer-reviewed papers that were presented at the 2007 ACC-RAC conference

	If you ask questions like this...	Then you should have attended this ACC-RAC 2007 presentation titled...
Clinical Presentations	What percentage of patients presenting to a chiropractic practice are hypermobile and may be at risk for CVA? Is there a screening test for this condition?	<i>Examination of joint hypermobility as a pre-manipulative test</i>
	What are the characteristics of patients with metastatic disease that are not yet detectable on x-ray? How should they be managed?	<i>Undiagnosed metastatic disease presenting as mechanical spinal pain: a report of three cases and review of management strategies</i>
	What is the typical presentation of a patient with functional femoral neuropathy?	<i>Diagnosis and management of functional femoral neuropathy: A case study</i>
	What are the factors that I need to be aware of regarding patient trust and how does this relate to continuity of care, frequency of care, and expectations of care?	<i>Exploring associations between patient-provider trust, patient's frequency of visits, continuity of care, and expectations of care in chiropractic practice</i>
Basic Science Presentations	How accurate is the scapula position in order to determine thoracic spinal levels?	<i>Identification of thoracic spinal levels by palpation versus an x-ray gold standard</i>
	For patients presenting with suspected radiculopathy, should I expect the pain to follow a dermatomal pattern?	<i>Pain patterns and descriptions in patients with radicular pain: Does the pain necessarily follow a specific dermatome?</i>
	Do patients with low back pain have different functional motor patterns than patients who do not have back pain?	<i>An investigation into motor pattern differences used during prone hip extension between subjects with and without low back pain</i>
	Are there significant structural or anatomical differences that might affect how the upper cervical spine is analyzed?	<i>Principal components analysis of the atlas vertebra</i>
Educational Presentations	How consistent or different are chiropractic terminology and vocabulary taught at the chiropractic colleges?	<i>An electronic survey of nomenclature used in chiropractic colleges in the United States</i>
	Are there methods for effectively teaching practitioners to use scientifically-based clinical practices?	<i>Standards, learning objectives, and a curricular model for teaching evidence-based practice</i>
	What are the affiliations with chiropractic educational facilities and healthcare in the VA?	<i>Chiropractic academic affiliations within the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system</i>
	Are there guidelines that the chiropractic profession should be following when it comes to conflicts of interest in continuing chiropractic education courses?	<i>Managing conflicts of interest in continuing medical education: a comparison of policies</i>

knowledge and skills, and those who enjoy meeting top researchers and educators in the chiropractic profession. Attendees include a wide variety of people. You do not need to be a researcher or an educator to attend. Those considering attending should know what this conference is and what it is not, so that there is no disappointment if someone was expecting another type of conference (Fig 1).

You may ask, "Aside from all the great new knowledge, meeting the top researchers in the field, and participating in important topics that are facing our profession, what else is in it for me?" My answer is that the conference also offers continuing education credits for most states and includes continuing education for diplomates for participating organizations such as the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Practitioners. Thus, in addition to all the new knowledge and skills that you will gain, you will get credit as well. For more information about the next ACC-RAC conference that will be held in Washington, DC, March 14 to 15, 2008, please visit www.chirocolleges.org or www.c3r.org/accrac.

What ACC-RAC is:

- A scientific and educational conference for educators, researchers, clinicians, administrators, health policy makers, students, and anyone else interested in chiropractic
- A forum for scholars to present and discuss their latest work
- An event for various designated groups to meet to collaborate, discuss, and plan for the future of the chiropractic profession
- A set of selected training sessions and cutting edge research papers that are presented before they are published
- A conference that is attended by chiropractic researchers, educators, and lecturers from all over the world

What ACC-RAC is not

- It is not a marketing or practice management seminar
- It is not a systems-based technique seminar
- It does not sell or promote products, gimmicks, or "get rich quick" schemes
- It is not a political meeting for people to promote their agendas
- It is not a place for conference planners and attendees to make decisions for, or dictate actions to, the profession
- It is not a place for heavily biased thinkers or one-track-minded people

Fig 1. What you need to know about the ACC-RAC conference.