

## Support the Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act

Dear Colleague:

I invite you to cosponsor the Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act, to ensure seniors have improved access to chiropractic care as allowed by state law.

Since 1972, Medicare has placed limitations on the ability of chiropractors to fully treat their Medicare patients. Unlike other forms of insurance, Medicare limits the ability of chiropractors to order needed x-rays, lab tests, or other diagnostic procedures. Instead, patients are required to see another provider to have such scan or test ordered, then return back to their chiropractor to receive the prescribed care. Not only is inconvenient for the patient, it delays needed care, and adds additional costs to the Medicare program.

This legislation would streamline the Medicare program and align it with coverage from the VA, DOD, FEHB and private insurers. This bill would simply allow chiropractors to bill Medicare for the full scope of chiropractic services as allowed by state law, and treat them like any other provider in the Medicare program.

This bill is being introduced at a critical time as policymakers continue to grapple with the opioid substance abuse crisis, which has experienced a resurgence in the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Chiropractors are being utilized by health care plans, including Medicare and Medicaid, as a first course of treatment for lower back and neck pain as opioids become a last resort treatment. In fact, the American College of Physicians called for noninvasive therapies to be first-line treatments for lower back pain in new clinical guidelines in 2017.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, for 2018, CMS implemented quality metrics that embrace the ACP recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

Ensuring seniors are able see the provider of their choice is a key tenant of Medicare – we believe that should extend to chiropractors too. Please join me in cosponsoring the Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act to make that a reality. If you have questions about or wish to cosponsor the bill, please reach out to Cheyenne Freely ([Cheyenne.Freely@mail.house](mailto:Cheyenne.Freely@mail.house)) and Jessica Burnell ([Jessica.burnell@mail.house.gov](mailto:Jessica.burnell@mail.house.gov)) in Rep. Higgins' office.

Sincerely,

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p1218-overdose-deaths-covid-19.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2603228/noninvasive-treatments-acute-subacute-chronic-low-back-pain-clinical-practice>

<sup>3</sup> [https://qpp.cms.gov/docs/QPP\\_quality\\_measure\\_specifications/Claims-Registry-Measures/2018\\_Measure\\_131\\_Claims.pdf](https://qpp.cms.gov/docs/QPP_quality_measure_specifications/Claims-Registry-Measures/2018_Measure_131_Claims.pdf)