

State Specific Workers Compensation Studies

“Chiropractic Treatment of Workers’ Compensation Claimants in the State of Texas.” Executive Summary. MGT of America Feb 2003.

This retrospective study of workers’ compensation claims from 1996 to 2001 was conducted to determine the use and efficacy of chiropractic care in Texas. The researchers reviewed 900,000 claims during that time period to determine if chiropractic was cost-effective compared to medical treatment. They found that chiropractor treatment costs were the lowest of all providers. Their data clearly demonstrated that increased utilization of chiropractic care would lead to declining costs relative to lower back injuries.

Folsom BL, Holloway RW “Chiropractic care of Florida workers' compensation claimants: Access, costs, and administrative outcome trends from 1994 to 1999.” *Topics in Clinical Chiropractic* 2002; 9(4): 33-53.

This retrospective study of Florida workers’ compensation claims from 1994-1999 found that the average total cost for low-back cases treated medically was \$16,998 while chiropractic care was only \$7,309. Patients treated primarily by chiropractors were found to reach maximum medical improvement almost 28 days sooner than if treated medically. Findings from this analysis of the Florida Claims and medical files indicate that considerable cost savings and more efficient claims resolution may be possible with greater involvement of chiropractic treatment in specific low back cases and other specific musculoskeletal cases.

Jarvis KB, Phillips RB, Danielson C. “Managed Care Pre-approval and its Effect on the Cost of Utah Worker Compensation Claims.” *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 1997; 20(6): 372-376.

5000 claims from 1986 and 5000 from 1989 were examined for injured individuals in the Utah Worker Compensation Fund. The study compared cost for those who received chiropractic care and those who received medical care. From 1986 to 1989 the cost of care for chiropractic increased 12% while medical care increased 71%. The replacement of wages increased 21% for those receiving chiropractic care and 114% for those receiving medical care.

Tuchin PJ, Bonello R. “Preliminary Findings of Analysis of Chiropractic Utilization in the Workers' Compensation System of New South Wales, Australia.” *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 1995; 18(8): 503-511.

In this study researchers analyzed WorkCover Authority data from New South Wales. Of 1289 cases reviewed 30% had back problems. 12% employed chiropractic care for spinal injury workers’ compensation claims. The total payments for all cases using chiropractic and physiotherapy care were \$25.2 million, which was 2.4% of the total payments. When 20 claims were chosen at random the average chiropractic cost of care was \$299.65, while the average medical cost was \$647.20. A trend in data collected indicated that when greater than 60% of total cost of treatment came from chiropractic care the number of days missed from work was 9.5. When less than 60% of total cost of treatment came from chiropractic care the number of days missed from work was 50.3.

Ebrall PS. “Mechanical Low Back Pain: A Comparison of Medical and Chiropractic Management within the Victorian Workcare Scheme.” *Chiropractic Journal of Australia* 1992; 22(2): 47-53.

This study reviewed claims made in a twelve-month period involving work related mechanical low-back pain. Management by chiropractic care and medical care were compared. 39% of claims reviewed for individuals visiting chiropractors required compensation days while 78% of claims for those visiting medical doctors required compensation days. The average number of compensation days needed for those visiting chiropractors was 6.26 days and 25.56 days for those visiting medical practitioners.

Jarvis KB, Phillips RB, Morris EK "Cost Per Case Comparison of Back Injury Claims of Chiropractic Versus Medical Management for Conditions With Identical Diagnostic Codes" *Journal of Occupational Medicine* 1991; 33(8): 847-852.

This workers' compensation study conducted in Utah compared the cost of chiropractic care to the costs of medical care for conditions with identical diagnostic codes. The study indicated that costs were significantly higher for medical claims than for chiropractic claims. The sample consisted of 3062 claims or 40.6% of the 7551 estimated back injury claims from the 1986 Workers' Compensation Fund of Utah. For the total data set, cost for care was significantly more for medical claims, and compensation costs were 10-fold less for chiropractic claims.

Nyiendo, Joanne. "Disabling Low Back Oregon Workers' Compensation Claims. Part II: Time Loss." *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 1991; 14(4): 231-239.

This report focused on time lost for individuals who visited DCs versus those who visited MDs for treatment of low back pain. Median missed days of work for individuals with similar severity of injury was 9.0 days for those visiting DCs and 11.5 for individuals visiting MDs. Individuals visiting chiropractors more often returned to work having missed one week or less of work days. There was no difference in time lost for individuals visiting DCs and MDs with no previous history of low back pain. For claimants with a history of chronic low back problems, the median time loss days for MD cases was 34.5 days, compared to 9 days for DC cases. It is suggested that chiropractors are better able to manage injured workers with a history of chronic low back problems and to return them more quickly to productive employment.

Nyiendo, Joanne, Lamm, Lester. "Disabling Low Back Oregon Workers' Compensation Claims. Part I: Methodology and Clinical Categorization of Chiropractic and Medical Cases." *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 1991; 14(3): 177-184.

This study examined 201 randomly selected workers' compensation cases that involved low back injuries that were disabling. The study found individuals who visited DCs less often initially had more trips to the hospital for their injuries than those visiting MDs.

Johnson MR, Schultz MK, Ferguson AC. "A Comparison of Chiropractic, Medical and Osteopathic Care for Work-Related Sprains/Strains." *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 1989; 12(5): 335-344.

This study analyzed data on Iowa state record from individuals in Iowa who filed claims for back or neck injuries in 1984. The study compared benefits and the cost of care received by individuals from MDs, DCs and DOs. There was a focus on individuals who missed days of work and were compensated because of their injuries. Individuals who visited DCs missed on average at least 2.3 days less than individuals who visited MDs and 3.8 days less than individuals who saw DOs. Less money was dispersed as employment compensation on average for individuals who visited DCs. On average, the disability compensation paid to workers for those who visited DCs was \$263.66, \$617.85 for those who visited MDs, and was \$1565.05 for those who visited DOs.

Wolk, Steve. "An Analysis of Florida Workers' Compensation Medical Claims for Back-Related Injuries." *Journal of the American Chiropractic Association* 1988; 27(7): 50-59.

This study is an analysis of worker's compensation claims in Florida from June through December of 1987. All of the claims analyzed were related to back injuries. The greater purpose of this study was to compare the cost of osteopathic, medical and chiropractic doctors. The cost of drugs was not included in the analysis. The results of the study lead to the finding that individuals who had compensable injuries and were treated by chiropractors often times were not forced to be hospitalized. It also revealed that chiropractic care is a "relatively cost-effective approach to the management of work-related injuries."

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