

Aspire to Excellence

AMERICAN CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL REPORT
2015



Mission

ACA is a professional organization representing doctors of chiropractic. Its mission is to preserve, protect, improve and promote the chiropractic profession and the services of doctors of chiropractic for the benefit of patients they serve. The purpose of ACA is to provide leadership in health care and a positive vision for the chiropractic profession and its natural approach to health and wellness. On behalf of the chiropractic profession, we accomplish our mission and purpose by affecting public policy and legislation, by promoting high standards in professional ethics and quality of treatment and by carrying out a dynamic strategic plan to help ensure the professional growth and success of doctors of chiropractic.





President's Message By Anthony W. Hamm, DC

From my vantage point, ACA is moving in the right direction. Through diligence, patience and a strong team-based approach to leadership, we have bolstered our association's financial position and worked toward improvement of our orga-

nizational structure. ACA is, indeed, becoming more relevant to the wider health care community, this profession and, most importantly, our members.

As an organization, we have strived to reach beyond our borders and to address issues to which we know the profession is well qualified to contribute solutions. For example, in early 2015, I was a participant on behalf of ACA in a Chronic Pain Breakthrough Collaborative meeting hosted by the Samueli Institute and funded through the Institute of Healthcare Improvement. The meeting focused on the public health crisis caused by the epidemic overuse of prescription pain medications in the United States. The work of the collaborative ultimately led to development of an integrated care model for chronic pain patients. Our message about the value of conservative care is beginning to resonate.

This year also brought ACA into closer and more cooperative relations with medical directors of Medicare Administrative Carriers (MACs). ACA is now working directly with individual MACs and with the support of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

Services (CMS) to develop standardized resources to clarify and simplify chiropractic documentation requirements. These collaborations are a historic and immensely positive step forward for the profession. On a personal note, and relative to CMS and payment policy, my second two-year term as the first chiropractic physician to co-chair the AMA Relative Value System Health Care Professional Advisory Committee (RUC HCPAC) came to a close.

Through ACA's public policy and advocacy initiatives, I had the privilege to meet with the Department of Health and Human Services, CMS, Medicare contract medical directors and the Federal Trade Commission on issues critical to our inclusion in Medicare and the defense of important provisions of the Affordable Care Act (PPACA). I can assure you that ACA—more than any other national chiropractic association—has worked tirelessly and successfully to promote and protect the non-discrimination provision (Section 2706) of PPACA, which benefits all chiropractic physicians nationwide.

I was tremendously excited to assume the role of ACA president two years ago, and it has given me a unique glimpse into our future. Over the past year alone, I had the opportunity to travel to the annual SACA Leadership Conference in Des Moines. I also visited several SACA chapters, including National University of Health Sciences, Lombard, Ill., and Florida, Northwestern Health Sciences University, Palmer West and Davenport, and University of Western States. I am scheduled to visit New York Chiropractic College soon, and it was an honor to deliver the commence-

ment address at Logan University. I also addressed the research committee at the ACC-RAC meeting and attended the World Federation of Chiropractic conference in Athens, where I participated as a panelist on delivering health care value. Throughout my travels, I was continually impressed by the caliber and dedication of the people I encountered. The future does indeed look bright for our members and our patients.

That said, I am happy at this time to hand the mantle of president over to my successor. It has been an exhilarating experience. I am most proud of the work our leadership team has done to narrow the focus of this organization. As part of this process, we identified four "pillars" that will drive our strategic plan and subsequent initiatives: organizational excellence, advocacy, communications and health policy. With these guiding pillars, ACA will become more targeted in its goal setting and more effective in its resource management.

A special thanks to all ACA members for their support over these past two years. And, may I say, it has truly been an honor and privilege to serve as president of this dynamic association.



Chairman's Message By Richard Bruns, DC

As the end of my term approaches, I am pleased that this annual report reflects that a lot has been accomplished by your association staff in Washington, D.C., the Board of Governors (BOG) and the House of Delegates (HOD).

First and foremost, we followed through on the HOD mandate to align spending with income (known as zero-based budgeting). We finished our second year with a budget surplus while at the same time taking on some pretty significant systems modernization projects. Case in point is our new database/website content system. As part of this process, we have included a way to fund ongoing upgrades to the system so we can avoid becoming antiquated and better adapt to changing member needs. Our intent is to keep ACA on the cutting edge of technology and member services.

We also embarked on innovative modernization of our structure and function. This will make ACA more focused and efficient, positively affecting our finances and productivity. Next, we are enhancing our governance to allow more time for tackling strategic issues in the HOD and spend less time and expenses for addressing internal issues that have historically monopolized our face-to-face meetings.

The Executive Committee, BOG and HOD continue to work as a team. I expect this will translate into constant quality improvement (CQI), enhancing the value we provide to our members and ultimately the patients they serve. The work we started two years ago has matured to the point that we are realizing the benefits of our vision as an organization. We have become more fiscally responsible and focused on achievable goals (with action steps, metrics and outcomes-driven effort), making ACA a much stronger organization.

Our ongoing efforts to strengthen relations with chiropractic organizations and vendors will lead to a strong and unified voice. This effort is paramount in achieving our goals to maintain and improve direct access for our patients to the services that DCs are trained and tested competent to provide. We want to eliminate any financial barriers or discrimination patients encounter when they choose conservative chiropractic services first. I would like to extend thanks for the support and advice these partners have shared over the past year.

Our licensure as physician/doctor and our current scope will continue to be attacked by competitors, and the specter of antitrust requires ACA to be a strong voice against discrimination. We perform best in this role when we have a plan that strategically coordinates and unifies the entire profession.

Fiscal responsibility, structural/organizational integrity and efficiencies, and a qualified and eager staff working closely with the HOD, board and president are paramount to our continued success. A renewed focus on attaining goals and desired outcomes is also part of the changes that will continue into the future.

We live in a time of dynamic change, increased competition and great opportunity. Never before has the chiropractic profession been in a stronger position. The public's growing preference for the services that chiropractic physicians provide, the evidence and outcomes data supporting those services, and the strength of the American Chiropractic Association lead me to look forward to a bright future for our profession and our patients.

American Chiropractic Association Board of Governors 2015-2016



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From the Desk of the Executive Vice President By Richard Miller

From my vantage point, I perceive an absolute commitment on behalf of the men and women who serve as ACA's leaders to confront head-on the many challenges facing the profession as a whole and facing ACA as a

member-driven organization. This past year, ACA found itself in the midst of change—a necessary and vital process I expect to continue as ACA's leaders and staff work together to forge a national association that is even more robust and responsive to the needs of its members than it has ever been over the past several decades.

The process of change began in earnest when ACA's Executive Committee, and later the full Board of Governors, began to function as ACA's new Strategic Planning Committee. This process of strategic planning remains a dynamic one that will expand to include the House of Delegates in major ways and is then to involve ACA's membership as a whole. It constitutes a major internal effort intended to be visionary and "game changing," as well as democratic, comprehensive and transparent.

While the strategic planning process continues onward, ACA is by no means standing still:

- Over the past calendar year, we successfully implemented a new Association Management System (AMS), or database, a major capital expenditure that completely replaced a series of outmoded internal systems, which were inefficient and costly to operate. Concurrent with the new AMS system, we developed and implemented a new Content Management System (CMS) that includes a completely redesigned and vastly more functional [website](#).
- Through the merger of our Payment Policy and Government Relations departments into a single entity, we sharpened our advocacy focus and have achieved further efficiencies and dollar savings.
- We upgraded our communications capabilities and products, launching a new electronic newsletter, [ACA Connects](#), and a complete overhaul, redesign and name change of our flagship publication, [ACA News](#), is in the works.
- We significantly expanded our [social media](#) presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

- As an important benefit, we provided our members with access to the very best content and tools available to help them successfully convert from ICD-9 to [ICD-10](#).
- We continue to provide ongoing training and vital information regarding the implementation of the federal [PIMA requirements](#) for proper documentation of Medicare claims, and we continue to lead the profession as the "proper and best source" for [Medicare](#)-related information.
- On the advocacy front, we have successfully passed legislation that would expand the profession's role and presence in the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system, and we are spearheading the profession's drive to achieve "[full physician status](#)" in Medicare.

And more is to come!

Lastly, membership revenues are critical to the success of ACA's operations and programs. To grow and prosper, we must all work together to expand ACA's membership base. It is vital that we do so. Each and every ACA member has an important role to play in growing the association, so please reach out to your non-member colleagues today, and bring them into the ACA family.

Strategic Plan

ACA's Strategic Planning Process Lays Foundation for Future Achievements



With all the changes in today's health delivery system and to ensure ACA is being responsive to members' needs in this new environment, ACA kicked off a comprehensive strategic planning exercise in 2015 to review all aspects of the association's structure. This future-oriented, ongoing planning exercise will bring dynamic and positive changes to the way ACA serves its members and advances the national interests of the profession.

Initial meetings resulted in the determination that, in order to achieve strategic goals (see box), there are four important areas—"Pillars of Success"—where ACA must strengthen its operations and where its resources and initiatives should be prioritized. These areas are: Policy, Advocacy, Organization and Communications.

Through the lens of the strategic planning process and the Pillars of Success, ACA's achievements over the past year take on new significance, laying the foundation for an association that is ready to meet the needs of its current and future members and the challenges that the new health care landscape presents.

Initial Strategic Goals Identified

As part of the strategic planning process, ACA identified four initial goals to advance the profession and better position the association to take on future challenges. They are:

- Expand access to chiropractic services in Medicare by pushing for full-physician status for doctors of chiropractic.
- Rebrand ACA so it is relevant to current and future members.
- Evaluate ACA's governance structure to see if it is relevant in today's world and congruent to the success of the association.
- Create alignment between ACA's resources and its goals.



Advocacy Excellence

Successful Outreach and Education Programs Targeting Medicare Documentation

Establishing relationships with key contacts within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and high ranking officials at each of the Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) was a top priority in 2015. By end of year, ACA achieved its initial goals...and much more. ACA is now consistently working closely with individual MACs (with the support of CMS) to develop standardized resources to clarify and simplify chiropractic documentation requirements. ACA also has addressed issues contributing to the profession's high claims error rate. Additionally, ACA representatives, coordinating with state MACs, provided educational programs with multiple state associations.

2015 Achievements

Launch of National Medicare Equality Petition

In February 2015, ACA's House of Delegates passed a resolution making Medicare parity a top legislative priority. By October, ACA launched the *National Medicare Equality Petition*. The petition was created to give seniors the Medicare coverage they need by allowing full access to and reimbursement for services provided by doctors of chiropractic (subject



to state scope of practice). By the end of 2015, the petition had been signed by more than 7,000 doctors and patients, and aggressive efforts to gain more signatures, including a strong social media campaign (featuring videos, testimonials and information graphics), were in progress.

Majority of ACA-PAC-backed Candidates Win Election

The American Chiropractic Association-Political Action Committee (*ACA-PAC*) enables ACA members to pool together financial resources to help elect pro-chiropractic candidates across the country. ACA-PAC is the primary political action committee dedicated to electing pro-chiropractic candidates to the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. ACA-PAC is bi-partisan and contributes to pro-chiropractic Democrats and Republicans. In the 2013-2014 election cycle, ACA-PAC contributed \$258,000 to congressional candidates who back the

chiropractic profession and ACA's goals. ACA-PAC won 88% of the races it supported, contributing to 75 individual races. In the 2015-2016 election cycle, ACA-PAC donated \$77,000 to 51 individual candidates seeking office in November 2015.

ACA Provides Oversight of CMS Chiropractic Documentation Improvement Program

On April 16, 2015, Congress passed the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA), which included provisions to develop and implement an education and training program aimed at reducing the chiropractic profession's claims error rate, increasing compliance with Medicare regulations and improving claims documentation skills. Since then, ACA has met with several CMS and MAC representatives to discuss development and implementation of this program. CMS officials commended ACA for establishing collaborative working relationships with MACs. By year's end, CMS had developed a webinar on its website to address primary problem areas and provide suggestions for improving documentation skills. More resources for DCs will be rolled out in 2016 and the CMS Office of Program Integrity is planning to hire a DC.

2015 Achievements

NCLC Lobbying Day Results in Introduction of Senate VA Bill



ACA members from Florida visit their congressional representative during NCLC 2015.

As a result of lobbying during the National Chiropractic Leadership Conference (NCLC) 2015, several members of Congress co-sponsored ACA-backed legislation—proving again that hearing from a constituent on an issue is the single best way to gain a member of Congress' support. Most notably, a House companion (H.R. 1170) to ACA's Senate Veterans Affairs bill was introduced as a result of meetings between DCs, students and their elected officials in Congress.

In all, NCLC 2015 brought more than 700 members of the chiropractic profession to Washington, D.C., resulting in 281 Capitol Hill visits and promoting a unified message in support of chiropractic and ACA's legislative initiatives.

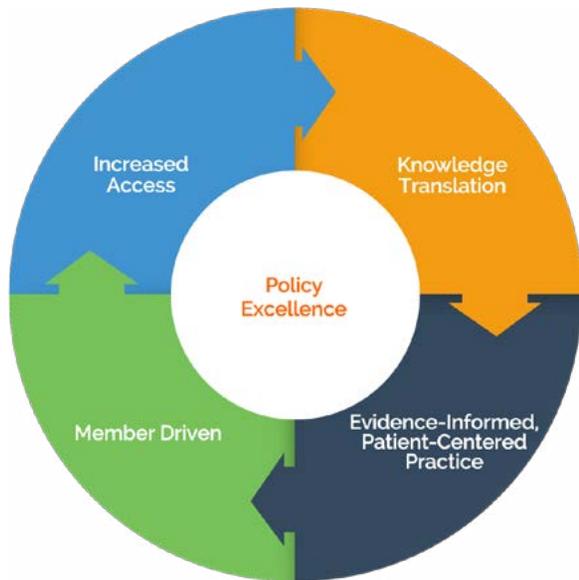


DCs at ACA headquarters following the ICD-10 training session.

ACA Led the Profession in ICD-10 Preparedness

The transition to ICD-10 weighed heavily on all health care providers in 2015. ACA was dedicated to helping doctors of chiropractic prepare for the conversion, expending an enormous number of staff hours and available resources. As a result, staff created several tools to aid members, including a webinar explaining the basics of ICD-10 and helping DCs decide on a solid implementation plan; the *ICD-10 Toolkit* (2nd Edition), which provided detailed, downloadable resources; and the *ICD-10 Mapping Tool*, which translated almost 200 codes commonly used in chiropractic clinics.

ACA also developed a six-hour seminar on ICD-10, held at NCLC 2015. The positive response to the training prompted ACA to offer it to state associations. The program, hosted by volunteer members, was held 24 times in 10 states. The trainings not only positioned ACA as the source for ICD-10 coding guidance but also strengthened its relationships with participating state associations.



Policy Excellence

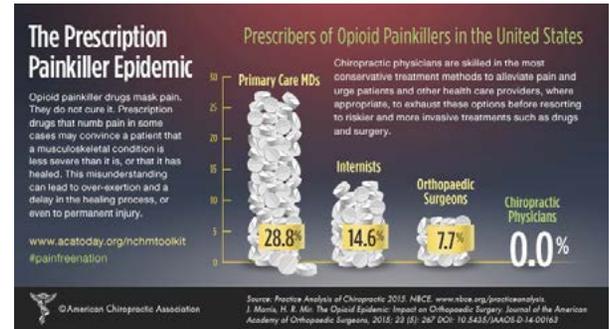
ACA Amplifies Its Position on Conservative Care First

The epidemic of prescription (opioid) pain medication abuse—and chiropractic’s ability to be a part of the solution—was a major focus of ACA public education and media efforts in 2015 (and later the basis for a resolution proposed for the 2016 HOD meeting). The topic continued to receive widespread coverage by the media—giving ACA an unprecedented opportunity to make the case for conservative care. To this end, ACA used a multi-pronged strategy to make its position more visible to the media, public policy makers, consumers and the health care community.

2015 Achievements



- In April 2015, ACA submitted *comments* on the National Pain Strategy, a draft plan to tackle the opioid crisis created through an interagency collaboration of the Department of Health and Human Resources, the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. ACA’s comments highlighted research supporting the effectiveness of chiropractic services and its ability to reduce health care costs.
- ACA tailored the theme of *National Chiropractic Health Month* (NCHM) 2015 to address the opioid crisis and provide another opportunity to make the case for conservative care. The 2015 theme, #PainFreeNation, and the resources in the NCHM toolkit promoted the safety and effectiveness of chiropractic’s conservative approach to pain management. #PainFreeNation resulted in significant media exposure for ACA, including coverage by *Forbes*, *Pain Week* and *Clinical Pain Advisor*, and a hard-hitting editorial by ACA President Dr. Anthony Hamm in the *National Pain Report*. The campaign garnered 17 state and local government proclamations, setting a new record.



- ACA *responded* to several articles about the opioid crisis in major news publications and websites, explaining the vital role that non-drug approaches such as chiropractic services can play in helping people avoid or reduce the use of addictive opioids. Letters to the editor were sent to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *TIME* magazine and ModernHealthcare.com.

ACA House of Delegates Passes Resolutions

Other official policy positions taken by the ACA House of Delegates in 2015 included:

- Identification of six key elements that should be considered or included in a modern chiropractic practice act.
- Affirmation that the use of assessment tools to gather patient-reported outcomes is in accordance with best practices and evidence-informed care.



Communications Excellence

Strengthening ACA's Brand, Meeting Member Needs with New Publication

With the need to reach members with critical information reinforcing the value of ACA membership and inspiring action, ACA took a critical look at its publications in 2015 to see where refinements could be made to strengthen ACA's brand identity and sharpen messaging.

As a result, ACA's new electronic e-newsletter, *ACA Connects*, was created. Launched in July 2015, the new biweekly newsletter aims to engage ACA members more effectively by providing not only news and updates on ACA and profession-wide issues, but also information on opportunities to engage with ACA through social media, education programs and

2015 Achievements



association events. Once launched, *ACA Connects* quickly gained positive reviews from members—to date, open and click rates track well above industry averages.

Strategic Use of Social Media Supports Public Relations Efforts

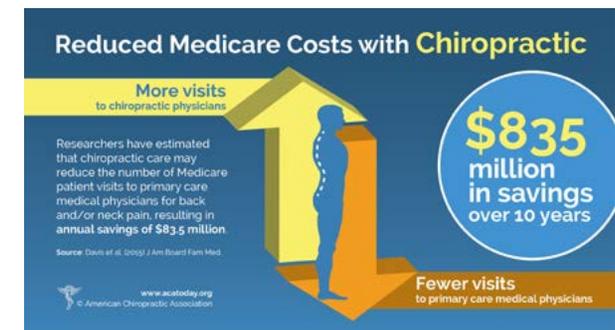
ACA's *social media* presence has grown significantly in recent years. Today, the association has more than 25,000 followers and subscribers on channels such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram. In 2015, ACA used new and creative ways to capitalize on its large social media audience to spread the word about chiropractic to the public and media alike.

ACA was active in 2015 in several "Tweet Chats" hosted by outside health care groups, including the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. Tweet chats are an online forum that allow issue experts, the media and the public to exchange information on a specific topic using a dedicated hashtag. ACA hosted its own (and very first) *Tweet Chat* on the opioid issue in September 2015 in conjunction with National Chiropractic Health Month.

With the increased use of social media, production of *information graphics* featured prominently in ACA's communications strategy in 2015. ACA created several shareable graphics that communicate the value and effectiveness of chiropractic services. The graphics have been widely reposted by members and non-members alike.



ACA hosted its very first "Tweet Chat" in 2015.



ACA shared information graphics like this one via social media throughout the year.

2015 Achievements



Exercise reduces your risk of falls by improving your strength, balance, coordination and flexibility.

ACA American Chiropractic Association
Healthy Living Tips
Falls Prevention www.acatoday.org/healthtips

Outreach Opens Public Health Opportunities for Members

In 2015, ACA explored not only new opportunities and tactics to spread its messages on the value of chiropractic services, it also made greater efforts to reach out to likeminded groups beyond the chiropractic industry. For example, ACA met with a representative of the National Council on Aging (NCOA) in April to discuss collaborating in mutual areas of interest. NCOA was receptive to ACA's offer to share information about its falls prevention tips with doctors of chiropractic for Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) 2015 on Sept. 23 and invited ACA to participate in its FPAD Tweet Chat. ACA also became a member of NCOA's Falls Free Coalition, a collaborative effort to educate the public and help older adults and their families fight back against falls. Moving forward, the relationship with NCOA will open new doors for DCs wishing to expand their public health presence through falls-prevention activities.



ACA Promotes Membership Excellence in Campaign

ACA launched an *image campaign* in 2015, "Aspire to Excellence," that highlights its members as premier representatives of the profession because of their dedication to advancing chiropractic through ACA membership and their commitment to professional excellence and high ethical standards, as embodied in the association's Code of Ethics.



Organization Excellence

Delivering Value to Members Through Better Understanding

ACA conducted an empowerment survey in 2015 to better understand what is important to its membership. The association's dedicated leadership continues to sharpen its message to communicate ACA's work and the immense value of membership both to members and non-members across the nation. Under the direction of the Membership Executive Committee, ACA completed a comprehensive member profile initiative to define the value proposition of membership types and to create messaging that speaks to the importance of membership throughout the lifecycle of a member's career.

2015 Achievements

Systems Upgrade Completed: Members Can #ExperienceACA!

In 2015, ACA embarked on a long-overdue, organization-wide association management and content management system upgrade, including the overhaul of its website www.acatoday.org. The goal of this project was to increase efficiency, productivity and improve the overall operational capabilities of the national office as a part of its three-year technology plan.

ACA's new website has been reconstructed to deliver the finest user experience. It is a place where DCs, chiropractic students and chiropractic assistants can go daily to get relevant information to help them build their careers and businesses. It is a primary resource for patients seeking to learn more about chiropractic, looking for a DC, or wanting to support chiropractic at the grassroots level. It is the clearinghouse for



ACA's redesigned website offers the finest user experience.

information about the profession for the media and for Capitol Hill. And, it is a dynamic site that will continuously address the ongoing needs of its audience and online communities.



SACA and ACA leaders gather at the 2015 Leadership Conference.

ACA and SACA: Future Leaders Start with Our Students

In 2015, the Student American Chiropractic Association (SACA) made significant progress in achieving several of the goals and objectives established at the SACA Business Meeting and Annual Leadership Conference in 2014. Through the generous support of its sponsors, the 12th Annual SACA Leadership Conference was held in October 2015 in Des Moines, Iowa, and was hosted by NCMIC. The event brought together more than 100 student leaders from chiropractic colleges across the country

2015 Achievements

McAndrews Leadership Lecture Introduced



Dr. Scott Haldeman delivers the inaugural Leadership Lecture.

At NCLC 2015, ACA introduced the McAndrews Leadership Lecture, featuring keynote speaker, Scott Haldeman, DC, MD, PhD, who presented on the chiropractic profession's past and future challenges. Dr. Haldeman is a foremost international authority on the management of spinal manipulation and widely published in the fields of neurology and chiropractic. During his session, Dr. Haldeman focused on the

historic factors that have influenced and shaped clinical practice for doctors of chiropractic, assessing the movement toward evidence-based practices. The packed education session was widely praised and will be a regular fixture of the conference moving forward.

Collaboration Yields Novel Post-Surgical Training Program

Working with the ACA Rehab Council and executive corporate member Laser Spine Institute, ACA developed and introduced in 2015 the first-of-its-kind professional development program: "*Post-Surgical Spine Rehabilitation (PSSR) Training*." This two-day, 12-hour seminar provides in-depth instruction to DCs in post-surgical spine rehabilitation of patients who have undergone minimally invasive spinal surgery. DCs also learn how to manage complex surgical cases and engage in effective communication with the medical community to convey the role of chiropractic.



DCs attend one of the first PSSR training sessions.

Career Center Upgraded

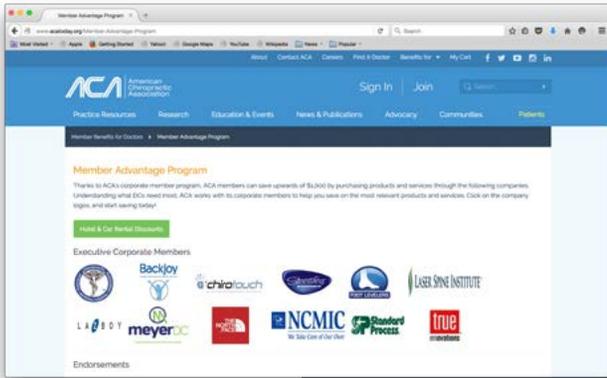
ACA reintroduced its *Career Center* in 2015 with a new and improved portal to help DCs advance their careers and their practices. Whether someone is looking for a job or looking to hire an associate, the ACA Career Center is dedicated to offering opportunities specific to chiropractic.

Specialty Councils Create Opportunities

More than 1,500 practitioners and students have a membership in one of ACA's 11 *specialty councils*: Acupuncture, Diagnosis and Internal Disorders, Diagnostic Imaging, Forensic Sciences, Neurology, Nutrition, Occupational Health, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Rehabilitation and Sports Injuries and Physical Fitness. Councils hold annual membership and education meetings across the country, providing substantive value to ACA members in the advancement of specialty knowledge, professional development, as well as networking for students, diplomates, diplomate candidates and general practitioners. To learn more, visit www.acatoday.org and click "Communities."



Dr. Scott Bautch discusses occupational health at a specialty council event during NCLC 2015



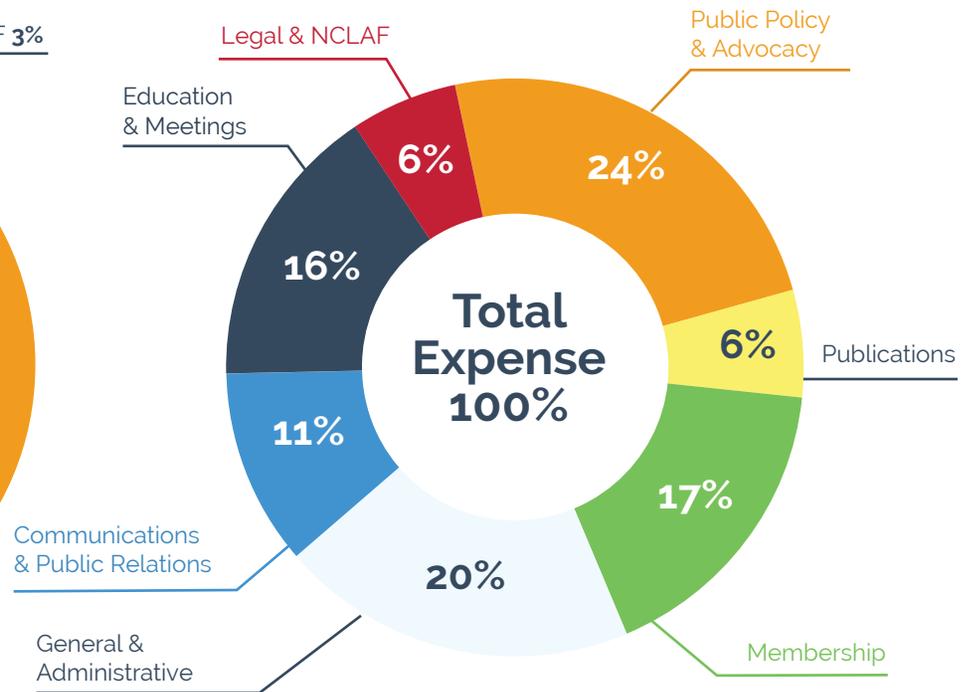
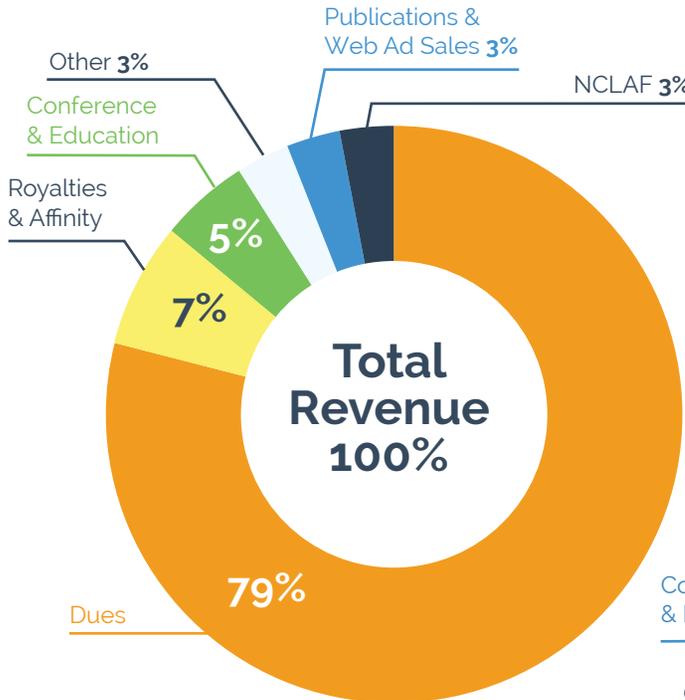
2015 Achievements

Member Advantage Program Offers Discounts

Members can turn to ACA's *corporate members* first when looking for products and services. ACA has developed important relationships with the corporate community to offer members special discounts.

2015 Expenditures & Income

The charts below outline the major areas of expenditure distribution in the ACA budget over the past year, as well as the major sources of income for the association.



Vision

High Standards, Freedom of Choice, Optimal Health

As ACA members we commit ourselves to the highest clinical and ethical standards, freedom of choice of healthcare providers and the pursuit of optimal health for the healthcare consumer. By 2023, through our perseverance and devotion to the public we serve, our profession will have achieved:

- Collaboration with other health care disciplines and integration into all health care delivery models that enhance individual health, public health, wellness and safety.
- Change in public policy, legislative, and regulatory arenas, resulting in a more effective U.S. health care system.
- Improved health care access and freedom of choice of health care providers for the American people, without discriminatory obstacles.
- Increased value of health care for patients, policymakers, and the public through the high professional and educational standards of the chiropractic profession.
- Healthier and more productive lives for the American people.

*Vision Statement of the American Chiropractic Association
Ratified by the House of Delegates in 2013.*

