



Statement of the American Black Chiropractic Association (ABCA):

Patients come to doctors of chiropractic (DCs) for help when they are in pain. They may have an injury, an illness, or are simply feeling the effect of time. Unfortunately, for many of those patients, their lifelong relationship with their doctor ends when they turn 65 and they lose access to their trusted chiropractor because **Medicare doesn't cover many of the benefits they need most.**

We're happy to acknowledge this scenario may finally be changing. In the 118th Congress, bipartisan legislation has been introduced in both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, the **Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act (S. 799 and H.R. 1610)**, will ensure seniors have access to all services in Medicare that chiropractors are licensed to provide. This is an important step in the process that sets the stage for congressional action this year.

The time is overdue to expand the options for patients in Medicare. Since 1972, Medicare beneficiaries have been able to visit their chiropractor but only for limited services. The medical profession has grown to recognize the benefits of chiropractic care. In fact, in 2017, the American College of Physicians (ACP) updated its guidelines for treatment of low back pain and now **recommends using non-invasive, non-drug treatments before resorting to prescription drugs.**

In addition, as policymakers seek to prevent the use of unnecessary drugs and surgery, DCs are poised to assist in the opioid effort by lowering the reliance on those drugs, especially in cases related to spinal related pain. To the extent that current policy arbitrarily restricts access to chiropractic services, it exacerbates these problems.

ABCA believes all seniors should have the right to choose their licensed care provider under Medicare. With Medicare currently serving more than 60 million Americans, and projections for that number to grow by a third over the next ten years, we believe Congress should ensure patients have access to all forms of care to prevent high-cost interventions. Importantly, the Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act **does not add new services under Medicare.** It simply allows patients to choose a chiropractor when they wish to do so.

ABCA stands ready to help make the Chiropractic Medicare Coverage Modernization Act become reality. We urge Congress to make patients a top priority and pass this commonsense legislation this session.