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**WCA Announces Support for Legislation Creating Primary Spine Care Practitioner**

*PSCP proposal offers proactive solutions to challenges facing patients in Wisconsin*

Madison, Wis.—The Wisconsin Chiropractic Association today announced its support for a bill, sponsored by Sen. Frank Lasee (R-Bellevue) and Rep. Joe Sanfelippo (R-New Berlin), that would create a new type of health care provider in Wisconsin called a Primary Spine Care Practitioner (PSCP).

“The Primary Spine Care Practitioner initiative is a proactive solution that will train Wisconsin chiropractors to help address the challenges facing our aging population, including the growing burden of back and neck pain, the inappropriate use of prescription drugs and the shortage of primary care physicians,” said WCA President Dr. Rod Lefler, a partner in the Neuroscience Group of Northeast Wisconsin in Neenah.

The proposal being circulated by Lasee in the Legislature would require the creation of a new practice act and licensure called the Primary Spine Care Practitioner governed by the state Medical Examining Board. Chiropractors interested in obtaining this optional licensure would be required to complete a master’s program that could potentially be offered by the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Studies show that back and neck pain are one of the most common reasons why patients visit doctors. To address this, health systems are creating spine centers where teams of providers, including chiropractors, provide integrated, patient focused care that is both cost efficient and produces better outcomes.

“Chiropractors have the opportunity to be part of the evolving integrated care model by building on their chiropractic training through education programs like the PSCP,” said Dr. Gene Yellen Shiring, Chair of the WCA Government Affairs Committee.

“Traditional chiropractic offices could integrate a Primary Spine Care Practitioner into their practice and manage cases from a conservative perspective, coordinate interventions, order advanced special studies and procedures and achieve better patient outcomes.”

A chiropractor who chooses to complete the PSCP training would practice under a dual license - as both a Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) and a Primary Spine Care Practitioner (PSCP). This is similar to how some chiropractors currently practice as DC’s and Physician’s Assistants (PA’s) or Nurse Practitioners (NP’s).

Allowing chiropractors to expand their scope of practice to manage over the counter and prescription medications was discussed last year by WCA members. Critics expressed concern that allowing more health care professionals to prescribe would exacerbate the problem of an overabundance of addictive pain killing drugs in Wisconsin’s communities.

Dr. Lefler said the problem is real, but the training proposed in the PSCP legislation would actually help reduce prescription overuse because chiropractors bring a conservative care model to treat musculoskeletal conditions.

“Chiropractic medicine is based on treating causes of lower back and neck pain, not treating symptoms with the use of pain-killing, addictive drugs,” Lefler said, noting that other non-addictive drugs, such as muscle relaxants and anti-inflammatory drugs, are usually more effective to help treat causes of lower back and neck pain.

“The Primary Spine Care Practitioner program builds on that conservative approach which we believe would help reduce the use of opiate-based drugs.”