

# The Update

Volume 1  
Issue 4  
July 2009

**NEW!**

Everything you  
need to know  
to start your  
own radio show  
now on one  
CD!



Available only  
through the  
FSCO

Only \$99.00  
For FSCO members

\$149 for non-  
members

To order:  
Call 800-521-9856  
or go to  
[www.straightchiropractic.org](http://www.straightchiropractic.org)

## Freedoms, Constraints, and National Organizations

By Felicia Stewart, DC, ACP

In chiropractic, every chiropractor, organization, and college shares a similar set of freedoms and constraints. The freedoms give all three the opportunity to define chiropractic and act upon that definition as they practice it, teach it, or support it. The constraints, on the other hand, imposed on all three from outside sources, limit the expression of their freedoms. All three are on a continuum between unlimited freedom and unlimited constraints. Their position on this continuum, relative to each other, creates some important differences between the three and ultimately illuminates the very important role played by the chiropractic organization.

We enjoy many freedoms within our profession. One is the freedom to choose a mission and create a mission statement. There are also the freedoms to broadcast that mission and to operate in a manner consistent with the mission. Another would be the freedom to participate in programs or events that fit with the mission and, just as importantly, to reject or choose non-participation in programs or events that do not fit with the mission. Along with these freedoms is the financial freedom to profit from activities that are in accord with the mission as well as the freedom to budget in accordance to the mission.

At the other end of our continuum are the constraints placed by various other groups or organizations that limit these freedoms. There are varying levels of constraints on the freedom to operate in a manner consistent with

the stated mission. There are also constraints on the ability to reject or choose non-participation in events or programs that do not fit with the stated mission. Likewise, there are financial constraints on the ability to profit and budget in accordance with the mission. Therefore, while chiropractors, chiropractic organizations and chiropractic colleges are all relatively free to choose and broadcast a mission, they have some real differences elsewhere along the continuum of freedoms and constraints.

Let's start with chiropractors. Chiropractors can choose the mission of their office. They can choose, for example, the mission of subluxation correction to remove interference to the expression of mental impulses or they can choose the mission of correcting subluxation as a method of treating musculoskeletal disorders. They also have relative freedom to broadcast their mission (advertise) and practice in a manner consistent with their mission. Their main constraint here would be the particular laws of the state in which they practice. Both the laws of their state and any insurance companies they might submit claims to would be the main avenues of constraint to their financial freedoms and their freedom to participate or not in programs that may or may not be in accordance with their mission.

Chiropractic colleges also have relative freedom to choose their mission and advertise it. Their freedom to operate the college in accordance with the mission though can be

**FSCO Chairman**  
Bill Decken, DC  
(SC) 864-574-8047

**Vice Chairman**  
Greg Stetzel, DC  
(NJ) 973-948-5556

**FSCO Officers**

**President**

Shane Walker, DC  
(FL) 239-597-6099

**Secretary**

Kristen Denette, DC  
(MA) 508-230-5056

**Treasurer**

Bryn Gillow, DC  
(PA) 570-992-2929

**FSCO**

2276 Wassergass Road  
Hellertown, PA 18055  
1-800-521-9856  
[www.straightchiropractic.org](http://www.straightchiropractic.org)

constrained by an accrediting agency. The limitation may not be minor either. It may force the college to operate in a manner clearly outside of their stated or desired mission. It can certainly limit the college's ability to choose programs or events that are consistent with the mission but the far greater constraints are the ways in which the college is forced to participate in programs and events that are not consistent with its mission. Obvious examples would include teaching classes that are inconsistent with the mission as well as requirements that dictate outpatient exams and procedures that are inconsistent with the mission. In turn, these constraints contribute to subsequent financial constraints. Again, the main constraint is that required participation in programs and events inconsistent with the mission still costs money. The sum total of these programs in terms of staff and space and materials can be quite draining on a budget. The other side of this situation is that it also decreases available money from programs and events that would be in accordance with the mission.

Lastly, there are the chiropractic organizations. As with the other two, they have relative freedom to choose and advertise their mission. Their main advantage is the high level of freedom to operate in a manner consistent with their mission and to reject or choose non-participation in events or programs that are not consistent with their mission. This freedom makes chiropractic organizations vital to the chiropractic profession. They become the storehouses of our professional values and goals. They allow us to say, "This is how we see ourselves."

The FSCO is the national chiropractic organization for those chiropractors who wish to practice straight, subluxation-centered, non-therapeutic chiropractic. We have a clearly stated mission.

*The mission of the FSCO is to support and advance the practice of chiropractic that is exclusive for the location, analysis, and correction of vertebral subluxation (LACVS) because vertebral subluxation, in and of itself, is a detriment to the fullest expression of life. Our ultimate goal is to ensure the future of chiropractic as a separate and distinct profession to secure and insure public access to vertebral subluxation correction. We shall accomplish this by uniting and supporting chiropractors and organizations who share the FSCO mission through professional, legislative, educational and personal growth endeavors.*

That mission makes us a benefit to the other parts of our profession, the individual chiropractors and chiropractic colleges because we have the most freedom to do as BJ asked, to "Guard it well." The FSCO strengthens the profession because we can most clearly represent our raison d'être. This is of great benefit but of course, it is by no means our only benefit. We are a source of information about events and developments in the chiropractic profession which affect us all and especially those developments that could diminish our right to practice in accordance with our mission. We can help establish mentoring relationships between chiropractors looking to improve a particular aspect of their practice or who need support in getting a new practice off to a great start. We are a source of seminars geared to meet the needs of those practicing LACVS for great numbers of families. Add to that scholarships and products that help chiropractors communicate their mission and educate their patients and a précis of the benefits of FSCO membership emerges.

Yet the FSCO, like any chiropractic organization, has limitations as well. The main limitation of any chiropractic organization is membership. The strength of any organization lies within the membership. Membership strengthens our stance as the storehouse of our professional values and goals. Membership allows us to say, "See all of us? This is how we see ourselves." So if you are reading this and you are a member of the FSCO, great. But now go one step farther and get a colleague to join as well. If you are not currently a member, then join today and add your voice to the chorus of those already working hard for a future in which being free of subluxation is a freedom enjoyed by every family.

**Felicia Stewart, DC, ACP**, has been practicing in Rock Hill, S.C., for over 18 years, maintaining a family-oriented cash practice. She was a past instructor at Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic and currently serves on the Board of Directors of both the F.S.C.O. and the Palmetto State Chiropractic Association.