

Chiropractors rebut workers' comp study

Colorado chiropractors are taking to task a 1991 study of the state's workers' compensation insurance system.

The **Colorado Chiropractic Association** recently released an analysis of the study, done by the Towers Perrin company **Tillinghast**, and came to the conclusion that "the study probably grossly distorts the nature and costs of chiropractic care."

After the Tillinghast study was released, chiropractors published a one-page brochure refuting its findings, but their rebuttal didn't carry as much credibility as the report did. So the chiropractors hired William Kaempfer, an economist at the University of Colorado at Boulder, to prepare an in-depth analysis of the study.

Kaempfer's analysis examined the 1991 study as well as a similar Tillinghast report released last year.

Ken Spresser, a chiropractor in Arvada and a member of the association's board of directors, said copies of the analysis will be sent to legislators.

"I would hope they find there is some flaw here" in the 1991 study, he said.

Association members met last month with Jack Ehnes, Colorado's top insurance regulator, to explain the problems Kaempfer found with the Tillinghast study. Ehnes said he didn't buy the argument that Tillinghast used flawed methodology in its study but did agree that some other criticisms were worth looking into.



Jack Ehnes

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Ehnes, commissioner of the **Colorado Division of Insurance**, said he has asked Tillinghast to look into the chiropractors' complaints and, if valid, to make the necessary adjustments in the next study, which is due out within the next month or two.

Spreser said the Tillinghast report is misleading because it lists how much various providers are paid to treat injured workers. The information on chiropractors, which are paid the most on average, doesn't spell out that chiropractors do much of the diagnostic work and treatment in-house while other kinds of providers do more referrals.

Jane McGill, spokeswoman for the state's largest workers' comp insurer, the **Colorado Compensation Insurance Authority**, said she hadn't seen the chiropractors' analysis of the Tillinghast study and couldn't comment.

But she was able to address another of Spreser's concerns: that chiropractors are being cut out of the workers' comp system. Spreser said he has seen so few workers' comp patients that he dropped his certification, which the state requires for any provider to see an injured worker for more than 12 visits.

McGill said more employers are designating which provider their injured workers can see in exchange for reduced premiums, but most are picking physicians instead of chiropractors.