



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**For immediate release**

**Government announces chiropractic funding support for seniors**

**Edmonton, AB, Feb. 10, 2012**—Funding support for chiropractic services for seniors has been announced as part of the Government of Alberta’s proposed 2012/13 budget.

“This is a definite win for Albertans,” said Dr. Clark Mills, president of the Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC). “On behalf of our patients, we are appreciative of our government’s efforts in supporting seniors in their desire to lead healthy and independent lives.”

The budget will be put forward for approval in the coming weeks. The ACAC will continue to provide updates as soon as information becomes available.

The ACAC regulates the chiropractic profession in Alberta under the *Health Professions Act* and is firmly committed to its mandate of protecting the public, ensuring accountability and improving Albertans' health and well-being. Our more than 900 licensed members are specially educated and trained to diagnose, treat and help prevent disorders and conditions related to the spine, nervous system and musculoskeletal system, including back, neck and head pain. For more information, visit [www.albertachiro.com](http://www.albertachiro.com).

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## Media Backgrounder and Facts Sheet

### Public funding for chiropractic in Alberta

- Public funding for chiropractic services was discontinued in 2009
- The Minister of Health and Wellness has publicly stated the discontinuation of this funding was solely a budgetary issue, done to reallocate an estimated \$50 million annually in support of medically-required physician and hospital services, as prescribed by the *Canada Health Act*
- Discontinuation of funding had hard-hitting effect on seniors, particularly low-income seniors who generally have minimal if any extended health care insurance
- In fall 2011, Alison Redford publicly stated she planned to reinstate chiropractic funding for seniors should she win the PC leadership race
- On behalf of our patients, the Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors is appreciative of Premier Redford, the Minister of Health and Wellness and the Alberta government's commitment to choice for Albertans in their efforts to achieve a healthy lifestyle
- The ACAC will continue to provide updates on funding as soon information becomes available

### Seniors in Alberta

- There are an estimated 425,000 seniors in Alberta; more than 51 per cent live in Edmonton or Calgary
- Population projections suggest that number will increase to 642,100 by 2021; by 2031, approximately one in five Albertans will be over the age of 65
- In 2010, there were 58,900 seniors in the Alberta labour force
- Alberta's employment needs will require seniors to remain active and vital in the labour market; it is essential to keep them active, mobile and healthy
- Government of Alberta has very publicly committed to keeping seniors living independently and in their own homes for as long as possible; currently, 70 per cent of seniors live in their own homes

- Approximately 150,000 Alberta seniors (38 per cent of seniors population) are considered low income
- When chiropractic received public funding, Alberta seniors accounted for less than 10 per cent of the entire budget for chiropractic services, costing less than \$5 million per year; on average, seniors visited a chiropractor seven times per year

*[Source: Government of Alberta]*

### **Facts about back pain and chiropractic**

- Low-back pain affects 85 per cent of the population; Health Canada estimates that musculoskeletal disorders, including back pain, cost \$16.4 billion in combined direct (treatment and rehabilitation) and indirect (lost productivity) costs *[Source: Health Canada]*
- Back pain is the second most common reason for seeing a medical doctor *[Source: Health Canada]*
- Back pain is a significant cost driver for health care as it is the leading cause of prescription and non-prescription drug use, medical visits, costly and specialized diagnostic procedures, hospitalizations and restricted physical activity *[Source: WCB Alberta]*
- Chiropractic care has been demonstrated to be the most clinically and cost-effective treatment for back injuries and related conditions, occupational and non-occupational
- Chiropractors receive the highest patient satisfaction ratings for treatment of back and neck pain according to Consumer Reports, the Health Quality Council of Alberta and a nation-wide Environics study
- Research and studies have concluded chiropractic care can reduce health care costs and contribute to improved productivity
- More than half of Albertans have been treated by a chiropractor *[Source: Ipsos Reid]*
- Almost one million Albertans visit a chiropractor each year
- Alberta has the highest chiropractic utilization rate in North America *[Source: Wikipedia]*

### **The Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC)**

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