



WCCS

World Congress of Chiropractic Students

www.wccsworldwide.org

info@wccsworldwide.org



@wccschiro

The pressures of starting to practise as a newly graduated chiropractor

Edith Scalabrini

Narrative abstract: Commencing practice as a new graduate is quite stressful. Here I share my thoughts and provide some suggestions on how to ease the transitions to being the Doctor of Chiropractor you trained to become.

Indexing terms: Chiropractic; World Congress of Chiropractic Students, WCCS; Leadership; new graduate.

Exposition

In order to better understand this article, I feel like you should know a little bit more about myself. I just graduated from the *University of Quebec* in Trois-Rivieres and started practicing two months ago. I joined four amazing chiropractors in a pre-existing clinic, and I benefit from the clinic's visibility, given that it has been running for 20 years. Thus, a lot of my current patients are coming from the overflow of other chiropractors.

Starting to practice is really exciting. It does, however, come with a few stressful elements. The pressure, I personally feel, comes from three different things:

- ▶ the need to please
- ▶ the financial aspect, and
- ▶ comparing myself to others.

With people having more and more options for alternative care, I feel like the need to please is there more than ever. A lot of questions are constantly popping into my newly graduated head: *Did the patient like the treatment? Will they come back? Will they tell their family and friends that I'm a good chiropractor? Did I do enough? Did I do too much? Did I say the right things?*

... The WCCS is the long established global representative body of the world's chiropractic students. All students are warmly invited to reach out and participate ...'



I'm grateful for the 18 months of practice we have in the university clinic before graduating. I can't imagine going through all of that without the small confidence I gained during that time. Indeed, the *'fake it till you make it'* aphorism takes on a whole new meaning when you're making the decisions alone and there is no clinician to help back your decisions.

The fact is that every chiropractor brings a personal touch to their treatments, whether through the techniques they use or through their individual personality. No chiropractor can be perfect for every patient. In the end, we attract the type of patients we like to treat and who fit with our type of practice. We can't predict which patients will be the most satisfied, let alone which ones will refer the most patients to us in return.

We may think we've done the best treatment in the world, but the patient may think differently. This is why I constantly repeat to myself to carry out each treatment to the best of my knowledge while being really present, and the results will come by themselves.

In my opinion the financial aspect of a private practice is one of the most stressful elements for new Chiropractors. Indeed, most of us have student debts and little money to spare for unforeseen circumstances, or even buying the tools or equipment we might need to get us started.

These financial stresses bring me other kinds of worries. The thing is, I'm afraid to lose myself. I have witnessed Chiropractors give extravagant treatment plans to patients, which included many appointments, and have asked myself if it was really necessary. I'm concerned that my wallet will unconsciously influence my treatment plan.

On the other hand, this fear could influence my treatment plan toward the other side of the spectrum by making me offer an insufficient treatment plan. In the end, I have to remember to prioritise the patient and offer the best treatment plan for them based on my professional opinion. The patient is then responsible for their own decision of whether or not to follow my recommendations.

The financial aspect is the main reason why I'm so glad I joined a pre-existing clinic, so I don't have any fixed costs. That way, I'm not worried about overheads, expenses or being able to pay for other clinic-related expenses, and I'm much less stressed about it.

Finally, I have the impression of always comparing myself to other chiropractors in my clinic, to chiropractors who graduated at the same time as me, and to other health professionals. I'm glad to be the only newly graduated chiropractor in my region. That way, I can not really compare myself to my colleagues due to geographical variations and I don't pressure myself to do as well or better than them. Anyway, I have to remind myself that there is no point in comparing ourselves to others, regardless of the situation or profession.

I would like to finish this article by telling all the newly graduated chiropractors to take the time to appreciate the work we do. Starting to practice as a new graduate is not easy, but chiropractic can change lives by adding much more quality to it. If you find that you're like me and feeling a similar way, I hope this helps normalise the pressures you may be feeling on your end, and makes you feel less alone.

Edith Scalabrini

DC

Director, Internal Affairs, WCCS

Graduate of University of Quebec

Trois-Rivieres, Canada

Cite: Scalabrini E. The pressures of starting to practise as a newly graduated chiropractor. Asia-Pac Chiropr J. 2023;4.2 URL apcj.net/papers-issue-4-2/#ScalabriniNewGrad

Note

All contributions from the WCCS are gathered at apcj.net/WCCS

Email to president@wccsworldwide.org