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## How to Build an Evidence-Based Practice: Part 4

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In my last article (April 22 issue), I spoke of the value of utilizing evidence to substantiate and defend your practice against improper attacks. In this article, I would like to discuss how to utilize evidence to network and form referrals.

Today's health care market has created a new paradigm for many established health professions. The market has opened access to patients. Your local medical physicians can be competition or they can be an ally. Most of you are not familiar with the science and art of chiropractic. Their knowledge often consists of what they have seen in the news, heard on the radio, seen on the television or heard from some of their patients. Some information is positive, some is not.

So, why not create your own positive input to your local medical physicians and start building some relationships? If you are an evidence-based physician who is primarily concerned about the health of the patient, you will be viewed as a professional who could refer patients. However, they need to know which patients could benefit most from chiropractic care and what the optimal outcomes when referring? Whom can they work with in a cooperative fashion? How can they be sure they are providing appropriate care?

There are a number of ways you could introduce yourself to medical physicians and answer their concerns. In *Chiropractic* about inviting MDs to lunch, so we do not need to discuss that. One method I have found is to create a newsletter that provides information to answer all the above questions (and more) that come up in my daily practice. The latest evidence and are well-referenced, should the MD wish to follow up. They include information on when to refer for care; when it is best to refer for the optimum outcome; delineating the appropriate pattern of treatment in chiropractic best practices; when the patient should receive medical versus chiropractic care and vice-versa; and for which conditions a chiropractic physician might provide beneficial care.

By providing this evidence, you are creating name recognition in a respectable and concise fashion to all who come in your office, with the literature-based references to support the information. It is not advertising. It is information and improves your referral base. This can be reinforced when you begin sending narrative reports on your patients to your physician.

When there is concurrent care or complicating factors requiring medical care, a personal call to the physician and yourself integrated into the local health care community. Now, when patients ask their PCP about chiropractic care, the MD option and advises the patient to see you. The MD feels confident the care will be rational, evidence-based and they are informed with regard to progress.

You soon will find your network expanding in your local community by targeted networking, and the cost of advertising and advertisements. If you choose not to write your own newsletters, many companies offer them for a fee and you can make sure you read them and are familiar with the references. Then make copies, maintain your own Ex

mailing company. No overburdening of staff, no extensive costs, no long-term contracts and just a small you are reducing your external marketing costs, you might even be able to reduce staff salary costs.

There are numerous benefits to incorporating evidence-based care into your practice. It can work to imp nonchiropractic inquisitors, and to initiate public-relations networking.

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