

25 July 2017

## Working Together to Reduce the Impact of Chronic Back Pain

As highlighted by National Pain Week (24-30 July 2017), chronic pain is becoming increasingly prevalent in Australia. Chronic back pain is a key contributor towards this issue. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, one in six Australians are suffering from chronic back problems – that's an estimated 3.7 million people dealing with the physical and psychological effects of chronic back pain.

With around 70-90% of Australians suffering from lower back problems in some form at some point in their lives, it is fast becoming a major public health concern. Chiropractors are trained to diagnose, treat and manage the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders and partner with other healthcare professionals to work towards healthier, pain-free lives for Australians.

This year, the Chiropractors' Association of Australia (CAA) used its annual Spinal Health Week campaign to bring attention to chronic back pain and encouraged Australians to seek help. "More and more Australians are experiencing debilitating back pain, limiting their ability to engage in an active, healthy life" said Dr Andrew Lawrence, CAA National President.

The aim of this campaign was to promote a national discussion on this very important health issue and empower people to take control of their health. Chronic back pain can be isolating and distressing, and we encourage Australians not to suffer in silence.

Chiropractic care addresses spinal health issues without the use of surgery or drugs, offering a non-invasive treatment for chronic back pain. Chiropractors use non-surgical treatments such as spinal manipulative therapy (SMT) which has shown positive effects on back pain. A study has shown that in terms of short- and long-term patient-rated pain and disability, for (predominantly chronic) lower back pain, there is strong evidence that SMT is similar in effect to a combination of medical care with exercise instruction.

As healthcare professionals who focus on the relationship between the spine and the nervous system, chiropractors are also well-placed to offer preventative and lifestyle advice regarding chronic back pain. They aim to restore and maintain normal spinal function, collaborating with other healthcare professionals, where necessary.

CAA National will continue to work towards raising awareness of the issue and encouraging Australians to take steps towards better health, reducing the impact of chronic back pain in Australia.

For more information on CAA, chiropractic and chronic back pain, visit [www.chiropractors.asn.au](http://www.chiropractors.asn.au)