

FEATURE COMMENTARY**McKenzie Institute Chiropractic Branch**

Jonathan R. Soltys, DC, MS, Cert. MDT
Executive Director

The McKenzie Institute International launched the Chiropractic Branch in 2014. It was the first Branch designated specifically for a health care profession versus a country. The Branch was created to further the Institute's mission of providing training to qualified health care professionals to better serve the public. In a number of countries around the world, there are inherent challenges with allowing chiropractors to attend a country branch's credentialing courses. In addition, in many jurisdictions, the Branches are unable to provide continuing education credit (for license renewal) for chiropractors.

From 2008-2013, MII allowed Parts A & B courses to be offered to the chiropractic profession as a beta test in association with the National University of Health Sciences, located in Illinois (USA). The courses were taught by Steven Heffner, DC, Dip. MDT in an identical fashion to the teaching methods used for all McKenzie Institute USA courses. It was after this period that the Chiropractic Branch was formalized.

The Chiropractic Branch's instructors and assistants have a unique understanding of a chiropractor's background education, post-professional education, nomenclature utilized, manipulative & manual therapy techniques, philosophies, continuing education requirements and the different scopes of practices. The profession has in excess of twenty named chiropractic techniques and each one utilizes a different assessment method and incorporates different terminology. Our instructors are able to bridge any divide in conceptual understanding, which accelerates the attendee's understanding of the foundational MDT information.

MDT courses worldwide are typically held in consecutive 3 or 4-day formats and utilize weekdays. This standard format presents challenges for chiropractors since the vast majority are in solo practice and weekday attendance would result in a significant loss of business. As a solution, the Chiropractic Branch offers most of its courses over two weekends i.e. Saturdays & Sundays, and does not incorporate weekdays. In addition, the Part A & B courses begin at 1:00pm on Saturdays so chiropractors have time to practice or travel to the course Saturday mornings versus Friday afternoons or evenings.

As we continue to increase awareness of MDT to chiropractors worldwide, a growing number are pursuing MDT training. However, the Chiropractic Branch simply cannot offer enough courses to accommodate all chiropractors that have interest and we do not have the capacity to offer the advanced courses in any great number. We recommend to chiropractors that it is helpful to complete at least Part A with our Branch but if we cannot provide the next course in a suitable time frame, we encourage them to enroll with the respective country Branch, which many have done. Where permissible, we rely on the country Branches to serve these individuals especially with the advanced courses so they can continue their MDT training. While some already have, a number of Branches should see their chiropractor enrollments begin increase over time.

In addition to working with various chiropractic organizations, one of our Branch's strategies has been to collaborate with Chiropractic Colleges or Health Sciences Universities that have a chiropractic program. Thus far, the Branch has offered MDT courses on five U.S. campuses and it is in discussions with three additional institutions at this time. This has led to introductory information about MDT being included in the core curriculums of three institutions. Each of the faculty that are teaching this introductory material are in the process of completing their credentialing in MDT. After students attended their curricular class with the introductory information, a sizable percentage enrolled in the MDT courses (these students are in the clinical practice phases of their education). Two other institutions have indicated that they would like to begin offering the same introductory material in their curriculums as well. Recently, we've received requests from students who have completed MDT courses to develop a club on their respective campuses in support of MDT. The details of this are still being explored but this could create even more awareness and likely drive even more students to the courses.

The following comments have been repeatedly reported by chiropractors that completed MDT training:

"MDT offers safe and effective treatment protocols with patients that are in too much pain or have contraindications to the utilization of manipulation or other manual methods."

“There is far less physical stress utilizing MDT in comparison to other spinal or extremity techniques. This has helped protect our shoulders, low back, wrists and thumbs (these regions are responsible for the greatest amount of disability amongst chiropractors).”

The number of MDT credentialed chiropractors has now grown to over 120 in a short time frame.

The Chiropractic Branch looks forward to working with many country Branches as time progresses.

Branch Administrator

Jonathan R. Soltys, DC, MS, Cert.MDT
Executive Director, Chiropractic Branch
McKenzie Institute International
3 Alexander Road
Raumati Beach 5255
New Zealand

Direct: [630-258-4841](tel:630-258-4841) (U.S./EST)

Email: jonathan.soltys@mckenzieinstitute.org

About the Branch Administrator:

Jonathan has spent his professional career both in the academic and clinical settings. From 2003-2013, he served as the Dean of Postprofessional, Graduate and Continuing Education at the National University of Health Sciences, which is located in Illinois (USA). He developed numerous continuing education (CE) programs that were attended by thousands of health care professionals each year. He expanded the university's CE offerings to include medical physicians, physical/occupational therapists & assistants, acupuncturists, naturopaths and massage therapists. During his tenure at the university, he was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. He taught courses in clinical orthopedics, joint manipulation as well as medical-legal specialty lectures since being hired in 1994. In his 20 years of teaching experience, he's received ten awards for teaching excellence.

Concurrently, he practiced as a chiropractor in Illinois in multi-specialty clinics. During that time he gained invaluable experience collaborating with various health care specialists in working with patients suffering from chronic pain conditions.

He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Waterloo Ontario, his chiropractic degree at Logan College of Chiropractic, and his post-professional Master of Science degree in Advanced Clinical Sciences at National University of Health Sciences. The focus of the Master's degree was the prevention and management of chronic disease processes. He's completed over three thousand hours of continuing education training over various topics and is credentialed in Mechanical Diagnosis & Therapy. In 2014, he was appointed as the Executive Director of the Chiropractic Branch of the McKenzie Institute International.