



Becoming a Chiropractor

Realise your potential



**British
Chiropractic
Association**

Choose chiropractic

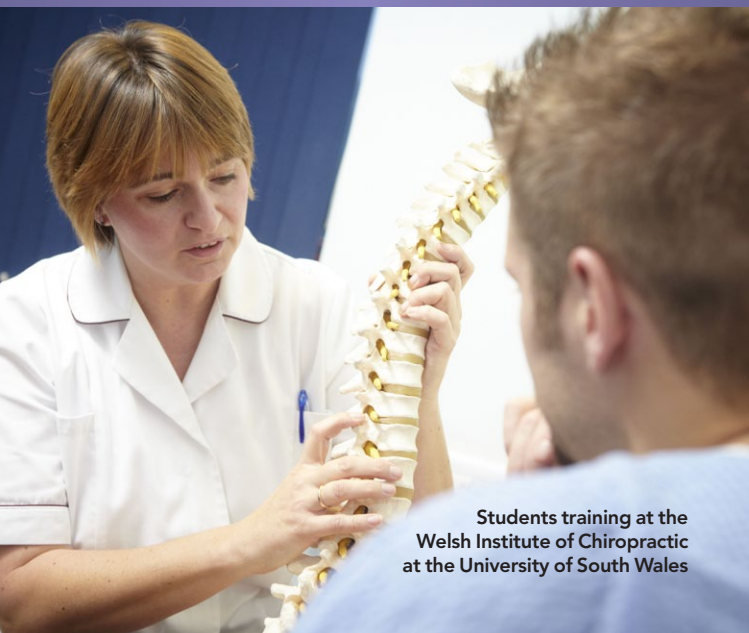
Are you looking for a career in healthcare with great job prospects, good pay, an independent working environment, a flexible lifestyle and lots of satisfied patients?

Are you interested in health sciences, natural health and wellbeing? Are you interested in helping others? Then consider a career as a chiropractor. It is interesting, varied, challenging, satisfying and rewarding.

Student, Maria, says

"Chiropractic was the greatest choice of my life. I am inspired every day to study, practice, shadow chiropractors and attend seminars. I know that serving people and making them feel better is what I want to do for the rest of my life"

Chiropractors are experts in diagnosing and treating spine problems



**Students training at the
Welsh Institute of Chiropractic
at the University of South Wales**

What do chiropractors do?

Most of the time chiropractors work one-to-one with patients in treatment sessions lasting from a few minutes to up to an hour depending on what needs to be done.

Responsibilities include:

- ~ taking a detailed medical history
- ~ carrying out a physical examination using standard medical as well as chiropractic procedures
- ~ taking or referring for x-rays, ultrasound scans or MRI
- ~ forming a diagnosis based on the history and examination
- ~ explaining this to the patient
- ~ planning a course of care in partnership with the patient
- ~ carrying out any manual or other treatments
- ~ keeping accurate clinical records
- ~ liaising with other health practitioners.

Working as a chiropractor

Most chiropractors work in small private practices in a wide variety of settings. High street or other town centre locations are popular but you can also rent rooms in a GP surgery or other clinic premises. You can even practice from home if you have space. Chiropractors either work alone with a receptionist or often with other chiropractors. Some work in larger multi-disciplinary practices with physiotherapists, massage therapists, acupuncturists or other health practitioners.

95% find employment within 6 months

Although chiropractic is available on the NHS it is only available in a few areas depending on local funding decisions. GP's can refer patients for private care too.

Most patients need a course of care over several visits so you get to know them. Many patients will come back again if they have further need of your care and often bring their families to see you. You will become part of the community with many people choosing your care over conventional medical care.

Flexible career choices

As most chiropractors are self-employed you can choose your working hours. Career breaks are also a possibility. This means a great quality of life.

One profession – many careers

Many chiropractors in general practice develop a special interest in treating pregnant women or sports people for example. Chiropractors are employed in a huge number of sports with teams including Premiership football and rugby, cycling, Alpine skiing and Formula 1. Chiropractors are also part of the medical team at the Olympic Games.

There are opportunities in research and academia too.

Graduate salary 50% higher than average

Salary

The salary of a new graduate is 50% higher than the average. Starting salaries are about £30,000 although this can vary. After a few years' experience this will rise as you get busier. A business minded chiropractor with a large practice employing others can expect to earn up to £80–100,000 after several years.

As most patients pay for their own care you have to have high standards of service to ensure that your practice thrives. This means that you will be responsible for promoting and running the business side of the practice as well. The training provided both before and after qualifying will help with this.



Training

The undergraduate chiropractic programmes are an integrated Masters course, commonly known as a Master of Chiropractic degree MChiro (Hons). Integrated Masters courses can be funded through a student loan in the same way as other undergraduate degrees, so they are a great way to fund a Masters qualification.

The integrated Masters degree is a full-time course over four or five years depending on your A-level grades or other qualifications. Entry for the four-year course requires A-level grades of ABB and for the five-year course BCC.

The courses cover basic sciences such as:

- ~ anatomy
- ~ physiology
- ~ biochemistry
- ~ biomechanics
- ~ pathology

as well as clinical sciences such as orthopaedics, neurology, radiology and diagnosis. The course also covers a variety of manipulative therapies and other evidence based interventions.

Chiropractors are regulated like doctors and dentists

The course is evidence based and similar to the training of medical doctors and other regulated health professionals. It involves you in practical examination skills from the first year and builds on these skills gradually teaching manual therapies until, in final year, you will be treating real patients under supervision.

Recent graduate, Collette, says

"I love my work and getting up every morning I feel I have a purpose. To me there is nothing more rewarding than seeing someone improve and knowing I did that."

Chiropractic is a regulated profession

Like other health professions chiropractic is regulated by an Act of Parliament. Chiropractors must register with the General Chiropractic Council and adhere to a strict code of conduct to maintain the quality and safety of patient care. Principles like honesty, integrity and professionalism are requirements in all health professions.

To be accepted onto the GCC register, you must have successfully completed a GCC accredited degree. You can do a foundation year or go straight in to the four-year Integrated Masters in Chiropractic (MChiro). These are available at:

- ~ Anglo-European College of Chiropractic (AECC) in Bournemouth, www.aecc.ac.uk
- ~ Welsh Institute of Chiropractic (WIOC) at the University of South Wales, www.southwales.ac.uk/chiro

**10 million treatments a year and
92% of patients are satisfied**



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**Front Cover: Student chiropractors at the
Anglo European College of Chiropractors**