

CASE STUDY INITIATIVE (CSI)

[Principal Investigator: Gregory D. Cramer, D.C., Ph.D.; Co-Investigator: Jerrilyn Cambron, D.C., M.P.H., Ph.D.]

A major challenge to performing high quality research in non-neuromusculoskeletal conditions is the lack of high quality case studies, case series, and n=1 studies in the chiropractic literature (Hawk 2000 J Neuromusculoskeletal System;7:150-5). Information and data from these types of studies are essential for developing appropriate hypotheses and for eventually informing clinical trials. The CSI is designed to make a significant positive impact on this gap in the literature.

One part of the funded program for curriculum development in Evidence-Based Practice is in-depth training in writing case studies. For example, students in Trimesters 8-10 will have lectures and labs designed to train them in the methods and skills of writing case studies (a parallel track that is more in-depth will be held for faculty). These sessions will be taught by an expert in this field (hired through the grant). In addition, ninth trimester students will each write a case report (which will be critiqued by the same research faculty member hired through the grant), and tenth trimester students will be required to write a formal case study suitable for publication (graded by the same faculty member). Students will be encouraged to choose unique cases and those that are non-neuromusculoskeletal in nature. One purpose for the tenth trimester assignment is to teach students the process of writing case studies so that if they have an important case in private practice they will be confident in their ability to write a case study of that patient. The teaching materials used in this program will also be formatted so that they can be included into part of the postgraduate curriculum, allowing field practitioners to become involved in the CSI. We are convinced that within five years this program could yield a significant number of case studies reporting on the chiropractic treatment of non-neuromusculoskeletal conditions that will be submitted for publication. This program could not only lay the groundwork for clinical trials in non-neuromusculoskeletal conditions, but this effort alone could also have an impact on the perception of chiropractic care by other professionals and the lay public.

Funding: National Institutes of Health, National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine R25AT002872.