



# North Carolina State Board of Chiropractic Examiners **CONNECTION**

**SERVING NORTH CAROLINA CITIZENS AND CHIROPRACTIC PROVIDERS**

## In Remembrance

The board lost a remarkable person when Carol Leigh Hall passed away suddenly in Concord, North Carolina on Thursday, December 3, 2015. She will be missed by many.

Carol had served the Board of Examiners for over 40 years, most of those as executive director, a position that she held at the time of her passing.

She was a tireless and ever cheerful executive who was the embodiment of efficiency and diplomacy. For many years, Carol also was deeply involved in the education of chiropractic assistants in North Carolina in both ad-

ministrative and teaching roles. Carol was active in many other facets of the chiropractic profession, with her logic, dependable steadiness and considerable experience to the benefit of many.

She was born March 7, 1942 in Surry County, NC to the late Edward Hunt and the late Vernel Hunt. Carol was a member of The Eastern Star and was a graduate of the North Carolina chiropractic nurse and chiropractic radiologic technology programs.

Survivors include her husband, Dr. Dennis LaVerne Hall, Sr. of Concord, NC;

son, Dr. Dennis LaVerne Hall, Jr. and wife Crystal of Concord, NC; daughter, Terina Hall Cronin of Iron Station, NC; grandchildren Dylan Cronin, Kaitlyn Cronin, Austin Cronin, Brittney Hall, and Dennis Hall III.; sister, Cheryl Harper and husband Rodney of Iron Station, NC; sister, Darla Wagner and husband Rick of Lexington, NC.

The funeral was December 7, with burial in Lexington NC.

Donations in Carol's name may be made to the Masonic Home for Children at 600 College St, Oxford, NC 27565.



## New Licenciates

In the October 2015 board exam, 19 chiropractic doctors received new licenses and 78 chiropractic assistants were also approved. In the January 2016 exam, 34 chiropractic doctors and 49 chiropractic assistants were approved.

## Board Transitions

Dr. Ricky Sides's last term has ended and Dr. Richard Davis has been appointed to fill this position. Dr. Sides, with 10 years of experience with the Board, will fill the newly created critical role of Director of Standards and Enforcement. Attorney Adam Bridgers of Charlotte has been appointed to fill the term left by the departure of Todd Poole, who served the board with distinction. In February, the governor's office appointed Dr. Jessica Benningfield of Mooresville NC to fill long-term Board member Dr. Michael Estramonte's position. We thank him for his years of service. Dr. Bruce Hilton was also reappointed in February.

## Treatment of Animals: Survey Results

In the last issue of the board newsletter, a survey was posted inquiring if chiropractors were interested in treating animals. Only 3% of all licenciates responded, but 92% of those indicated they were interested, with 65% preferring not to be supervised by a veterinarian, 85% approving of additional training approved by the board and 77% wishing to be able to accept animal patients independently of veterinary referral. The Board will continue to follow up on this matter and will report back to licenciates.

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## Inspector General Examines Chiropractic Medicare Claims

In September 2015, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the Department of Health and Human Services issued a report about chiropractic services for Medicare patients.

In that report, the OIG discussed claims for chiropractic services for the year 2013. They looked for questionable patterns of care that included what appeared to be maintenance care, upcoding practices and illogical numbers of services within a short time, while often shared with services such as physical or occupational therapy.

The OIG said that \$76 million in Medicare payments for chiropractic services was questionable, with almost half of these payments suggestive of maintenance care. They also stated that 2% of all chiropractors were responsible for half of all the questionable payments. Most of these chiropractors also had questionable payments in a prior year.

The OIG also stated that Medicare inappropriately paid \$21 million for chiropractic services in 2013 that lacked a primary diagnosis covered by Medicare.

The recommendation was made that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) should develop more reliable and stringent controls to identify active versus maintenance treatment, ensure that the diagnosis matched the treatment that was provided and refuse to pay claims and collect overpayments for those that did not meet requirements.

It is important to understand that there are very earnest efforts being made by governmental agencies and others

to assure compliance in these matters.

Over the past few years, there also have been numerous endeavors by leadership of the chiropractic profession to draw attention to this issue and, periodically, the Board of Examiners also sponsors speakers on these topics and also initiates programs designed to underpin these efforts.

## Legislative and Rulemaking Report

The Board has voted to adopt two final rules and has deferred one proposed rule.

Adopted were Rule 21 NCAC 10.0106 (a rule that, to prevent potential conflicts of interest, prohibits a sitting Board of Examiners member from simultaneously serving as an officer or board member of a chiropractic trade organization) and Rule 21 NCAC 10.0214 (this rule estab-

lishes a program of random office inspections and specifies the protocols under which inspections will be conducted).

Both of these Rules are effective February 1, 2016.

The random office inspection program will be administered by Dr. Ricky Sides, Director of Standards and Enforcement, who will present the implementation of the pro-

gram to the Board at the April meeting. A communication will follow to all Licentiates about the program with a target of starting the program in June.

The Board voted to defer Rule 21 NCAC 10.0208 Acupuncture (an amendment to the existing rule to require 300 hours of acupuncture training beginning July 1, 2019).



### North Carolina State Board of Chiropractic Examiners



**President:** Dr. Bruce A. Hilton (Conover NC)  
**Vice-President:** Dr. Miguel A. Cruz (Burnsville NC)  
**Secretary:** Dr. Richard K. Davis, Jr. (Conover NC)  
**Treasurer:** Dr. William Ray Armstrong, Jr. (Laurinburg NC)  
**Member:** Dr. Jessica Benningfield ( Mooresville NC)  
**Member:** Mr. Adam Bridgers (Charlotte NC)  
**Member:** Mrs. Jacqueline S. Hobbs (Hertford NC)  
**Member:** Dr. Randy M. Schilsky (Jacksonville NC)

**Executive Director:** Mr. Thomas R. Sullivan  
**Counsel to the Board:** Mr. Vance C. Kinlaw  
**Director of Standards & Enforcement:** Dr. Ricky Sides  
**Director of Communication:** Dr. Eugene A. Lewis

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## Q&A Session at Recent Board Meeting

Prior to the November 5 regularly scheduled BOE meeting in Greensboro, an open Q&A session was held with all attendees.

Topics included the need to expand the Board staff to meet the increase in the number of health care providers due to the mandatory certificate of chiropractic assistants and radiologic technologists, relocation of the Board office, transition plan for the retirement of Executive Director Carol Hall, funding of these new

initiatives, and the forthcoming office Inspection procedure.

This was a very productive and welcome exchange between licentiates and Board members and provided excellent feedback for the Board's consideration.

All regular Board meetings are open to the public and all meetings and other activities are posted in advance on the Board of Examiners website at <http://ncchiroboard.com>.



## X-Ray Imaging Speaker

Matthew Richardson, DC, DACBR will be sponsored by the Board of Examiners at the Spring NCCA Convention, covering six hours of imaging topics, including pediatric radiography and four hours spent on improving radiographic image quality. The convention will be held April 1-3, 2016 at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville NC

## Frequency of Patient Reexamination

In response to numerous inquiries by licentiates and by others, the Board of Examiners has sought to clarify the policy concerning the expected and reasonable frequency for re-evaluation of patients under care in North Carolina.

The Board policy states: "The physician should re-evaluate the appropriateness of further

care after approximately 12 office visits or when deemed necessary by the chiropractic physician.

If the patient shows improvement, the physician may recommend another treatment cycle.

For as long as improvement can be objectively demonstrated, the patient may continue treatment cycles.

However, if re-evaluation fails to demonstrate additional improvement after any two consecutive treatment cycles, the physician should assume that maximum therapeutic benefit has been reached.

Patients that have reached maximum therapeutic benefit may be candidates for supportive care, elective care, referral, or release."

## Newsletter Schedule

This Board of Examiners newsletter is calendared to be issued four times per year, in the month following each of the four regularly scheduled Board meetings held in February, May, August and November.

## Clarifying the Use of Lasers in Chiropractic Practice

The Board of Examiners is taking this opportunity to point out to chiropractic physicians in North Carolina that it is the opinion of the Board that the use of lasers is within the scope of practice when used for treatment of musculoskeletal conditions.

However, the use of lasers for

other purposes, such as cosmetic procedures, weight loss and other non-musculoskeletal treatment is not within the scope of practice for chiropractic in North Carolina.

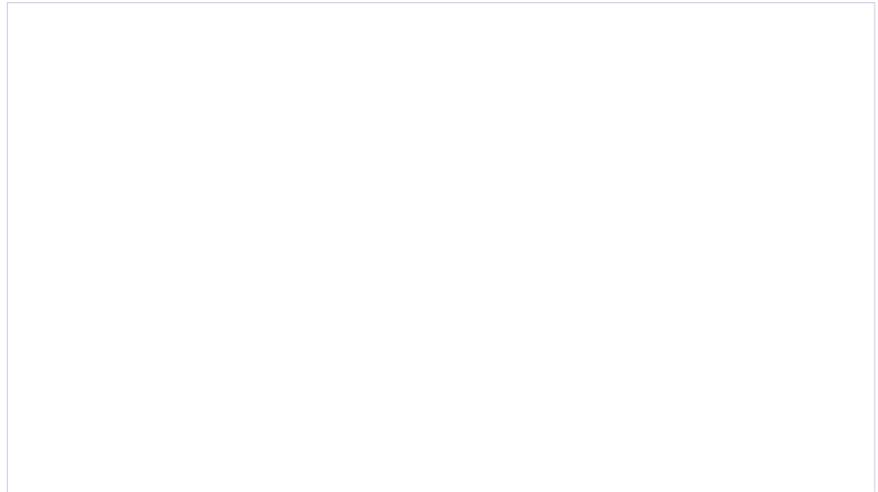
If it is brought to the attention of the Board that a laser has been used in a chiropractic facility for treatment outside

the scope of practice, appropriate measures will be taken.





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## Board Hires New Executive Director

A search committee was formed at the special December 17th board of examiners meeting, composed of Board members Drs. Estramonte, Hilton and Armstrong.

The committee received over 40 resumes from applicants and, following the final interviews, offered the position to Thomas R. Sullivan. He assumed the post on February 2.

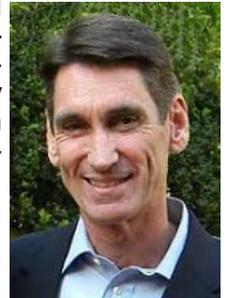
Mr. Sullivan's business career spans over 30 years in senior financial management positions with Fortune 500 Companies including Liberty Mutual, Allied Signal, Fleet Bank, Visa International, and Progress Energy, Inc.

(now Duke Energy). He has extensive experience with various types of boards including being a director on the board of the company he co-founded in 2012, OBX Computing Corporation.

Prior to that, Mr. Sullivan completed a successful 13-year career at Progress Energy, Inc. as Vice President - Treasurer & Chief Risk Officer. Mr. Sullivan raised over \$17 billion in capital during his career at Progress including financing the \$5.8 Billion acquisition of Florida Progress. He added the Chief Risk Officer title in 2005. In addition to all capital raising activities, Mr. Sullivan's responsibili-

ties included management of banking relationships, oversight of the pension and 401(k) programs, insurance, enterprise risk management and testifying at regulatory proceedings.

Raised in Syracuse, New York, Mr. Sullivan received his BA in economics from St. Lawrence University and his MBA from Northeastern University.



*Thomas R. Sullivan*

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