

Chiropractic Quality Assurance Commission

Interpretive Statement

Revised – 10/18/11

Title:	Practice of Chiropractic – Independent Chiropractic Examinations	Number: CH-12-13-12
References:	RCW 18.25.002 and 18.25.005	
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The practice of chiropractic, as defined in RCW 18.25.005, includes the performance of independent chiropractic examinations.

Chiropractors sometimes perform independent chiropractic examinations in which they physically examine a patient at the request of a third party in order to diagnose or analyze whether the patient requires further chiropractic treatment, but do not provide care or treatment of the patient. The chiropractor’s decision or opinion in this regard may directly affect the patient’s course of treatment, thereby potentially affecting the patient’s health and well-being.

RCW 18.25.005(1) states: *Chiropractic is the practice of health care that deals with the diagnosis or analysis and care or treatment of the vertebral subluxation complex and its effects, articular dysfunction, and musculoskeletal disorders, all for the restoration and maintenance of health and recognizing the recuperative powers of the body.*

The purpose section of chapter 18.25 RCW provides, among other things, that the statute was enacted [b]ecause the health and well-being of the people of this state are of paramount importance [and b]ecause the conduct of members of the chiropractic profession licensed to practice chiropractic in this state plays a vital role in preserving the health and well-being of

the people of the state[.] RCW 18.25.002

Given the purpose of the statute and the scope of practice stated in RCW 18.25.005, the Commission interprets the definition of chiropractic to include activities which involve diagnosis or analysis, as well as activities that include care or treatment. It is not necessary that both diagnosis or analysis and care or treatment occur together to be considered the practice of chiropractic.

If a chiropractor provides diagnosis or analysis but stops short of providing care or treatment, the activities are considered the practice of chiropractic. Similarly, if a chiropractor provides care or treatment based on another chiropractor's diagnosis or analysis, the activities are considered the practice of chiropractic. Therefore, the actions of independent chiropractic examiners, who provide diagnosis or analysis but do not normally provide care or treatment, fall within the practice of chiropractic.