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# Show some backbone and expose chiro cranks

What they can do is take your money in return for the risk they'll injure your child in the name of "wellness"

**H**UMANS are a weird mob. Some of us spend an inordinate amount of time and money beautifying the strands of protein that grow out of our heads. Others go into churches and pretend they're eating bits of a dead person. There are too many to count who think the upcoming planetary alignment will somehow affect their everyday lives.

Then there are those who are too squeamish to deliver their children a lifesaving vaccination, but will go to extraordinary lengths to let quacks crack their babies' backs.

Plenty of adults seem to think that chiropractors are just people you go and see for a sore back. They haven't done their homework, but that's up to them if they want to fork out for unproven therapies with dubious marketing practices.

What sends shivers up the spines of doctors and evidence-based types, though, is people who inflict chiro on their kids.

A swag of chiros even recommend 'adjustments' for newborns.

They claim kid chiro can cure autism or asthma, colic or colds. They can't. What they can do is take your money in return for the risk they will injure your child. And tell you it's in the name of "wellness".

One local chiro says it can help constipated kids. I suspect the fear of having your spine cracked could have somewhat of a bowel loosening effect.

That chiro also posts on their Facebook page that "subluxation" — a magical non-existent force they believe causes all sorts of ills and can be fixed by adjustments — could fix a breastfeeding issue. That claim appears to be based on one case involving a four-week-old girl.

Last year six chiros were sanctioned for sneaking into hospitals to treat newborns.

That transgression was revealed after the Chiropractic Association of Australia's President elect Helen Ale-



**SNAKE OIL:** Chiropractors and other registered health professionals still have a broad license to sell bunkum.

vaki had done it herself. Our over-regulated world gives us a false belief that we would be protected from harm and from charlatans. Chiropractors are trained at university. They are overseen by a board, and registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

All sounds kosher. (Kosher being a range of food rules contained in a man-made book about a man-made God such as only eating mammals that have split hoofs and chew their cud.)

The truth is that chiropractors and other registered health professionals still have a broad license to sell bun-

kum, and that they're rarely and barely punished when they break the rules. For example, the chiros who snuck into hospitals had some conditions put on them, such as doing ethics classes.

Writing in the Medical Journal of Australia, Monash University's Dr Ken Harvey has called for the entire Chiropractic Board of Australia to be sacked.

Their reaction to members making misleading claims has been feeble, to say the least, while AHPRA is playing down the number of complaints.

Dr Harvey found 200 websites which he says breach national legis-

lation that states health professionals must not mislead or deceive.

That means they're saying they can treat things they cannot. The more sensible of the chiros — and they are not all charlatans — concede that they may be able to treat back pain, but that's about it.

The more moderate ones appear sometimes to be in the minority.

Passionate advocate for evidence-based medicine Reasonable Hank (not, you can imagine, his real name) has managed to get hold of secret conversations between chiropractors that show the consistent connections between chiropractors and anti-vax-

xers. In one, jabs are compared to rape. You only need to look through a handful of websites to see the intimate connections with pseudosciences like homeopathy.

There's something about these guys; they start with an obsession with "toxins" and get online and convince themselves that the world is out to get them and that the answer is through "natural" therapies ... and somehow they end up believing you should manipulate the spine of newborns but not give them a needle to stop deadly measles. The authorities need to grow some backbone, crack the whip, and expose these crockpots.



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