

*From the President's Office
Dr Kean-Seng Lim*



Professor Euan Wallace AM
Chief Executive Officer

Safer Care Victoria

24 June 2019

Email only: SCVreview@safercare.vic.gov.au

Re: Review of Chiropractic Spinal Manipulation on Children under 12

Dear Panel Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Review of Chiropractic Spinal Manipulation on Children under 12.

AMA (NSW) is a medico-political organisation that represents more than 9,000 doctors-in-training, career medical officers, staff specialists, visiting medical officers and specialists and general practitioners in private practice in NSW.

AMA (NSW) acknowledges and supports the recommendations outlined in AMA Victoria's submission to this review.

Whilst the review is being conducted outside of NSW jurisdiction, AMA members in NSW are concerned the results of this review could have implications for practitioners in NSW. We note that the findings of the review are to be provided to the Victorian Minister for Health for reporting to the COAG Health Council, including any need for changes to the National Law.

We welcome this review and support changes to the National Law which would minimise potential risks from unsafe spinal manipulation on children.

AMA (NSW) supports evidence-based medicine and finds the quality of the overall body of evidence is not sufficient to conclude the clinical effectiveness of spinal manipulation on children under 12 years. Furthermore, there are concerns that the risks of spinal manipulation are far too great to offset any perceived and/or inconclusive benefits.

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Children with spinal conditions should be examined and treated by paediatric neurologists and spinal surgeons, who have medical expertise and education in childhood development.

In addition, there is concern that the review is too narrowly focused on chiropractors. Similar manipulations are provided by other health practitioners, including osteopaths. We recommend that policy restrictions on spinal manipulation for infants and young children should be extended to all allied health practitioners.

Lastly, regulators need to take a stronger stance against providers of pseudo-science treatments and therapies, which profit from vulnerable health consumers. A sizeable proportion of the chiropractic profession continues to believe in biologically implausible, pseudoscientific approaches to healthcare, and an alarming number of chiropractors openly dissuade patients from immunising their children. Governments must ensure that the chiropractic profession adhere to public healthcare guidelines, which include upholding healthcare initiatives such as vaccination.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Lim', written in a cursive style.

Dr Kean-Seng Lim
President, AMA (NSW)