

Ipsos MORI

Awareness and perceptions of chiropractors

Research Study conducted for the
General Chiropractic Council

October 2009

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Background

This report presents the findings of a survey among the general public. The research was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the General Chiropractic Council.

The objectives of the research were to ascertain the level of awareness of chiropractors and perceptions of what chiropractors do. The same study was conducted in 2004, and trend data from that survey have been included in this report for comparison purposes.

This study was conducted using Ipsos MORI's face-to-face omnibus survey, which was conducted between 25 September – 1st October 2009. The final sample comprises 1,982 adults aged 15+ and is weighted to be nationally representative of adults in the UK aged 15+. The topline findings are presented in the Appendix.

Unless otherwise stated, for any differences reported between respondent groups ("Group X is more likely than Group Y"), the differences are **statistically significant** at the .05 level (albeit assuming a purely random sample).

Reporting: in the graphs and tables, the figures quoted are percentages. The size of the sample base from which the percentage is derived is indicated. Note that the base may vary – the percentage is not always based on the total sample. Caution is advised when comparing responses between small sample sizes.

As a rough guide, please note that the percentage figures for the various sub-samples or groups generally need to differ by a certain number of percentage points for the difference to be statistically significant. This number will depend on the size of the sub-group sample and the % finding itself - as noted in the appendix.

Where an asterisk (*) appears it indicates a percentage of less than one, but greater than zero. Where percentages do not add up to 100% this is due to a variety of factors – such as the exclusion of 'Don't know' or 'Other' responses, multiple responses or computer rounding.

Publication of Data: our standard Terms and Conditions apply to this, as to all studies we carry out. Compliance with the MRS Code of Conduct and our clearing of any copy or data for publication, web-siting or press release which contains any data derived from Ipsos MORI research is necessary. This is to protect our client's reputation and integrity as much as our own. We recognise that it is in no one's best interests to have survey findings published which could be misinterpreted, or could appear to be inaccurately, or misleadingly, presented.

Findings

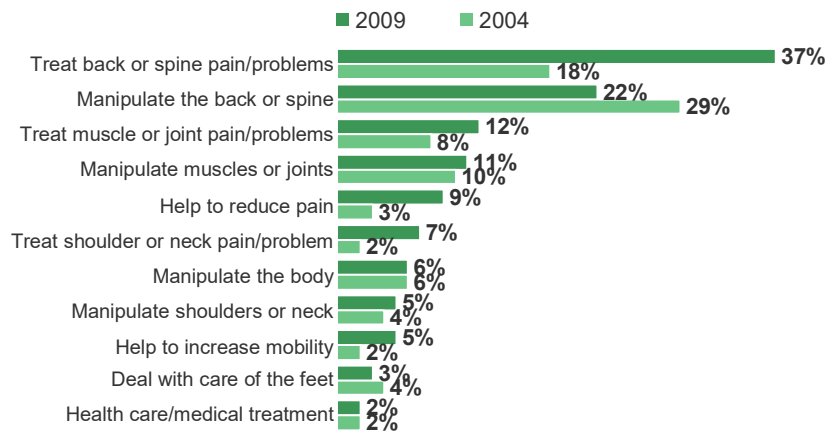
Awareness of chiropractic

Without prompting, people were asked what they know about what chiropractors do.

In general, awareness has increased since 2004 and those aged 45+, in particular, are more likely to be aware of the role of chiropractors.

Awareness of chiropractic

Q1 What, if anything, do you know about what chiropractors do?



Base: All respondents (1,989)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Of the different services that chiropractors provide, the most well-known, by more than a third (37%) of the public, is the treatment of back or spine pain or problems. This figure has increased from under a fifth (18%) who were aware of this in 2004. Those more likely to be aware of this include those aged between 45-54 (43% are aware), those in social grade AB (48%), and those in the West Midlands and South West (both 49%).

Over a fifth (22%) were aware that chiropractors manipulate the back or spine, a seven percentage point decrease from 29% in 2004.

Just over one in ten (12%) people are aware that chiropractors treat muscle or joint pain and problems – this rises to one in five (19%) of those aged over 65 and those in the South West. A similar percentage (11%) were aware that they manipulate muscles or joints, and, again,

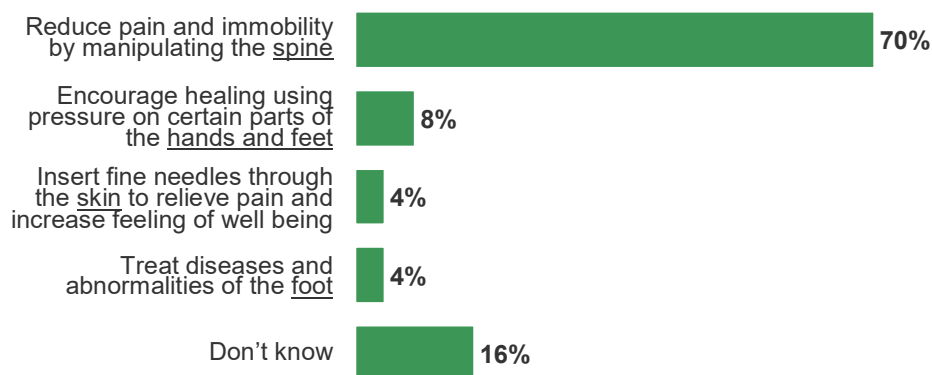
those aged 65+ and those living in the South West are more aware of this than others (16% and 20% respectively).

Description of what chiropractors do

People were also asked to pick the statement which described what chiropractors do from a list which also included descriptions of acupuncture, reflexology and chiropody. Seven in ten (70%) correctly identified “reduce pain and immobility by manipulating the spine”, a 4% increase from 2004. Women are more likely to make this correct identification than men (73% versus 67% respectively), as are those aged between 55-64 (80%) and residents of the South West (89%). Only half (51%) of London residents were able to identify the correct description of chiropractic.

Best description of what Chiropractors do

Q2 Which, if any, of the following statements best describe what chiropractors do?



Base: All respondents (1,989)

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI



Awareness of what chiropractors do

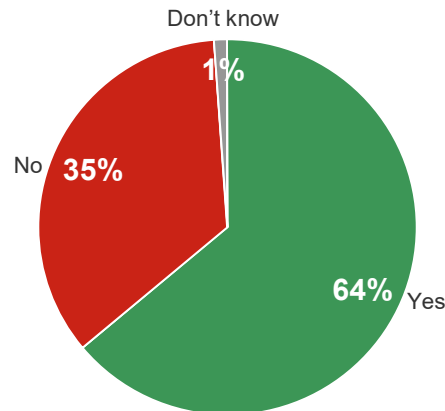
Respondents, upon being given a short description of the work of a chiropractor, were then asked whether they were previously aware of what chiropractors do, and just under two thirds (64%) claimed that they were, with just over a third (35%) claiming not to have been. These figures are broadly similar to the 2004 figures.

Those more likely to claim to have known include those aged between 45-54 (76%) and ABs (79%). Again, those in the South West are much more likely to claim to know what

chiropractors do than those in London (84% and 44% respectively). It should be noted, though that the proportion of residents aged 35 and over in this area is particularly high.

Awareness of what chiropractors do

Q4 Were you aware of what chiropractors do before today?



Base: All respondents (1,989)
Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI

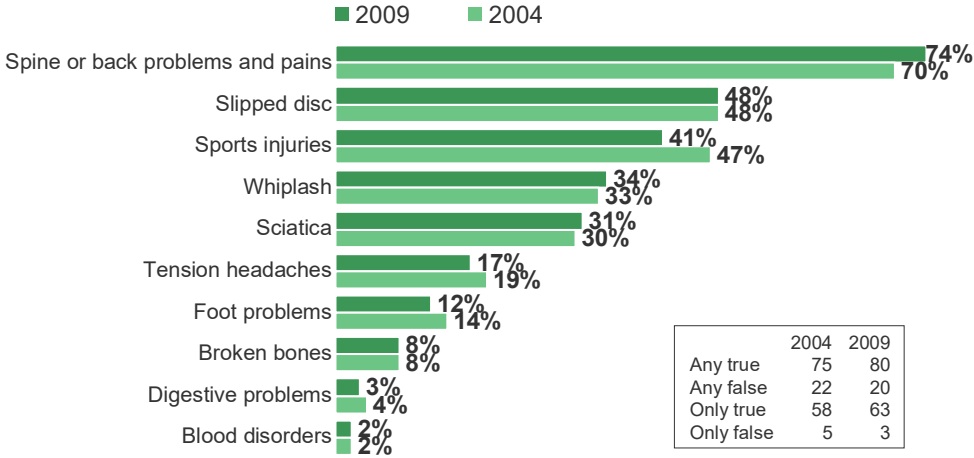
Knowledge of the conditions that chiropractors deal with

Respondents were also asked about the types of conditions that chiropractors deal with.

Encouragingly, the 'correct' conditions were those that scored the highest – three quarters (74%) were able to identify spine or back problems and just under half (48%) believed that treating slipped discs fell within their work, while a similar proportion (47%) believed that sports injuries did. Around a third added whiplash and sciatica to this list (34% and 31% respectively).

Conditions chiropractors deal with

Q3 Which, if any, of the following types of conditions on this card do you think chiropractors deal with?



Base: All respondents (1,989)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



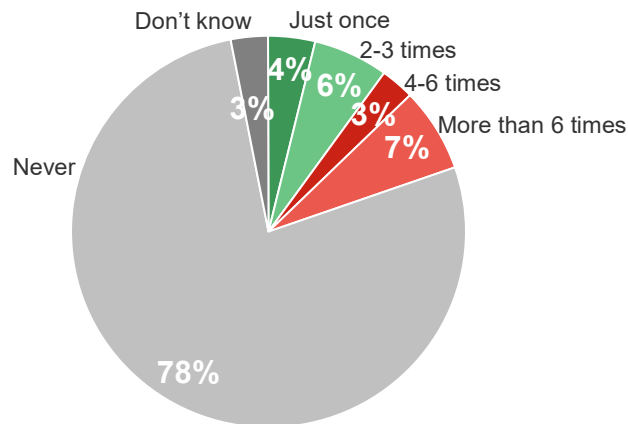
In total, four fifths (80%) were able to correctly identify at least one condition that chiropractors deal with, and just over three fifths (63%) identified one or more correct conditions. Both of these represent five percentage point increases from 2004.

Frequency of visits to Chiropractors

Looking at how frequently respondents have visited a chiropractor, around four fifths (78%) have never visited one. This figure was 85% in 2004. One in ten (10%) have been three times or fewer, and the same percentage have been more than three times.

Visiting a chiropractor for treatment

Q5 How many times, if at all, have you personally been to visit a chiropractor for treatment?



Base: All respondents (1,989)

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI



Those who are more likely to have been to a chiropractor more than three times are those who are more likely to know more about the profession and the services that a chiropractor offers. These include those aged between 55-64 (15%), ABs and those in the South West (both 16%).

Those more likely to have never been include those aged between 15-24 (89%), those in social grade DE (82%) and those in the North West (87%).

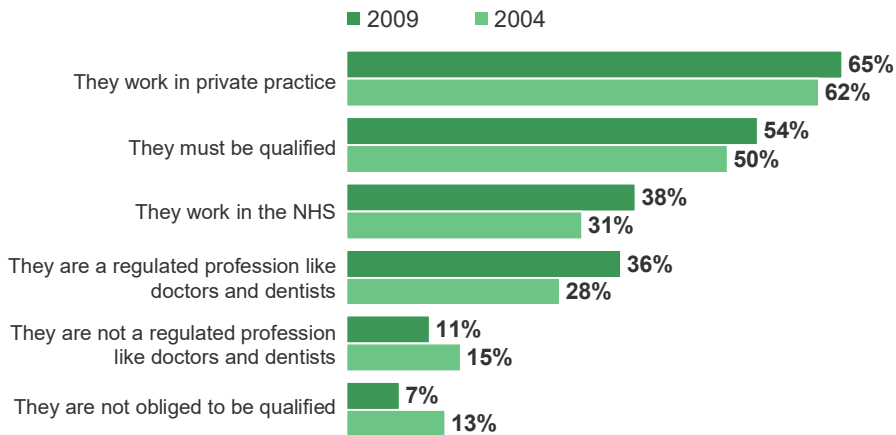
Perceptions of the profession

Respondents were also asked how much they knew about the profession of chiropractic – whether this falls within the NHS, and whether chiropractors need to be qualified and regulated. Respondents were shown a short list of statements about chiropractors and asked to pick those they believed to be true.

Two thirds of the public (65%) believe that chiropractors practice privately, and 38% believe that they work in the NHS, the latter score representing an increase of seven percentage points since 2004.

Understanding of chiropractic

Q6 Thinking of chiropractors, which, if any, of the following statements do you think apply to their profession?



Base: All respondents (1,989)

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI



Over half (54%) correctly assert that they must be qualified, with only 7% believing that this is not an obligation.

Over a third (36%) believe that the profession is regulated, an increase of 8 percentage points since 2004, and only 11% believe that it is not a regulated profession.

Conclusions

As was seen in 2004, there is broad awareness and understanding of chiropractic, despite the low levels of personal experience of chiropractic among the general public.

Clearly, however, some sub-groups are more likely to have a better understanding of what chiropractors do. Those aged between 45-64, those in the most affluent groups (ABs) and those in the South of England (excluding London) are more able to report on the services offered and the conditions that are dealt with by chiropractors.

Younger members of the public, those in less affluent groups (DEs) and those living in more urban areas such as London are the opposite.

As was the case in 2004, despite a relatively high awareness of what chiropractors do, people seem to be less informed about the profession itself. Only two thirds (65%) believe that chiropractors work in private practice, around half (54%) believe that they must be

qualified and even fewer (36%) that they are a regulated profession. Also, more people than in 2004 believe that chiropractors work in the NHS despite the fact that most chiropractors work privately.

Appendix : Questionnaire with topline data

Awareness & Perceptions of Chiropractors General Chiropractic Council

Topline results (5 October 2009)

- Overall, 1,989 respondents aged 15+ have been interviewed
- Interviews were carried out face-to-face, in respondents' homes
- Fieldwork conducted between 25th September and 1st October 2009
- Results based on all respondents unless otherwise stated
- Results are weighted to the known population profile of Great Britain
- Where figures do not add up to 100, this is due to multiple coding or computer rounding

Q1. **What, if anything, do you know about what chiropractors do?** DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK.

	2004 %	2009 %
Treat back or spine pain/problems	18	37
Manipulate the back or spine	29	22
Treat muscle or joint pain/problems	8	12
Manipulate muscles or joints	10	11
Help to reduce pain	3	9
Treat shoulder or neck pain/problem	2	7
Manipulate the body	6	6
Manipulate shoulders or neck	4	5
Help to increase mobility	2	5
Deal with care of the feet	4	3
Health care/medical treatment	2	2
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN)	5	1
Don't know	21	20
Never heard of it	14	8

Q2. SHOWCARD Which, if any, of the following statements best describe what chiropractors do? Just read out the letter or letters that apply. MULTICODE OK.

		2004	2009	
		%	%	
A	Insert fine needles through the <u>skin</u> to relieve pain & increase feeling of well being	5	4	ACUPUNCTURE
B	Reduce pain & immobility by manipulating the <u>spine</u>	66	70	CHIROPRACTOR
C	Encourage healing using pressure on certain parts of the <u>hands or feet</u>	8	8	REFLEXOLOGY
D	Treat diseases and abnormalities of the <u>foot</u>	5	4	CHIROPODY
	Other	0	0	
	None of these	3	3	
	Don't know	19	16	

Q3. SHOWCARD Which, if any, of the following types of conditions on this card do you think chiropractors deal with? Just read out the letter or letters that apply. MULTICODE OK.

	2004	2009
	%	%
Spine or back problems and pains	70	74
Slipped disc	48	48
Sports injuries	47	41
Whiplash	33	34
Sciatica	30	31
Tension headaches	19	17
Foot problems	14	12
Broken bones	8	8
Digestive problems	4	3
Blood disorders	2	2
Other	0	1
Don't know	20	17
Any true	75	80
Any false	22	20
Only true	58	63
Only false	5	3

- Q4. **In fact, chiropractors provide a 'package' of care to reduce pain and increase mobility based on physical manipulation as well as advice about exercise, lifestyle and activity; they are able to diagnose, prevent, manage and treat musculoskeletal disorders. Were you aware of what chiropractors do before today? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.**

	2004 %	2009 %
Yes	62	64
No	35	35
Don't know	3	1

- Q5. **How many times, if at all, have you personally been to visit a chiropractor for treatment? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.**

	2004 %	2009 %
Just once	3	4
2-3 times	3	6
4-6 times	3	3
More than 6 times	6	7
Never	85	78
Don't know/Don't remember	1	3

- Q6. **SHOWCARD Thinking of chiropractors, which, if any, of the following statements do you think apply to their profession? Just read out the letter or letters. MULTICODE OK.**

	2004 %	2009 %
They work in private practice	62	65
They must be qualified	50	54
They work in the NHS	31	38
They are a regulated profession like doctors and dentists	28	36
They are not a regulated profession like doctors and dentists	15	11
They are not obliged to be qualified	13	7
None of these	2	2
Don't know	14	12

Guide to statistical reliability

Because a sample, rather than the entire population, was interviewed the percentage results are subject to sampling tolerances – which vary with the size of the sample and the percentage figure concerned. For example, for a question where 50% of the people in a (weighted) sample of 1,982 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary more than two percentage points, plus or minus, from the result that would have been obtained from a census of the entire population (using the same procedures). The tolerances that may apply in this report are given in the table below.

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels (at the 95% confidence level)			
Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
1,982 Adults aged 15+	1	2	2
1,016 Females	2	3	3
330 ABs	3	4	5
<i>Source: Ipsos MORI</i>			

These tolerances apply to random samples, but in practice, good quality quota sampling has been found to be as accurate. Tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results between different elements of the sample. A difference must be of at least a certain size to be statistically significant. The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons between sub-groups.

Differences required for significance at the 95% confidence level at or near these percentages			
Size of sample on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
Males (966) vs Females (1,016)	3	4	4
ABs (330) vs DEs (464)	4	6	6
15-24s (322) vs 55+s (778)	4	6	7
<i>Source: Ipsos MORI</i>			

Definition of social grades

The grades detailed below are the social class definitions as used by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, and are standard on all surveys carried out by Ipsos MORI.

Social Grades			
	Social Class	Occupation of Chief Income Earner	Percentage of Population
A	Upper Middle Class	Higher managerial, administrative or professional	2.9
B	Middle Class	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	18.9
C1	Lower Middle Class	Supervisor or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional	27.0
C2	Skilled Working Class	Skilled manual workers	22.6
D	Working Class	Semi and unskilled manual workers	16.9
E	Those at the lowest levels of subsistence	State pensioners, etc, with no other earnings	11.7