

**ACA NEWS**  
**By James D. Edwards, D.C.**  
**ACA Treasurer and District VI Governor**

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEE BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD**

The ACA recently received a report from one state alleging that a major chiropractic managed care organization is significantly cutting back on the coverage obtained by ACA under the federal employee Blue Cross Blue Shield (BC/BS) plan. As part of our settlement with the national Blue Cross Blue Shield Association in the Trigon litigation, ACA was able to obtain new coverage for services provided by chiropractors under both the standard and basic options of the federal employee BC/BS plan. The information we are receiving now indicates that the new coverage we fought so hard to obtain may be in the process of being cut back or reduced by the policies of the managed care organization contracted by the local BC/BS plan to administer the chiropractic benefits. The ACA Board of Governors has reviewed the matter with our attorneys and we are attempting to arrange a meeting with the managed care organization in question to discuss the issue. The Board of Governors has assigned the highest priority to restoring this coverage. ACA members are asked to contact us if they encounter any problem along these lines.

**ORAL ARGUMENTS SET IN TRIGON SUIT**

We have been informed by the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals that our oral arguments are scheduled for Tuesday, February 24th in Richmond, Virginia, before a three-judge panel. We have also learned a little more about the process. One week before the hearing, two copies of all the appeal briefs filed by either side will be given to each of the three panel judges. Each judge will then provide a copy to his/her clerk, and for the next week they will discuss with each other the case and begin to form their individual decisions. Judges will not speak to one another during this period. Following the oral testimony, the judges will meet together for the first time; discuss the case and issue their decisions. The most senior member of the court will decide who will write the majority opinion. We could receive the majority opinion anywhere from one to six months later. The decision could range anywhere from an outright denial of our appeal, to issuing an order supporting one or all parts of our appeal, including the remanding of the case back to the original judge ordering a jury trial.

**AMERICAN MEDICAL NEWS REPORTS ON VA COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

In its January issue, the American Medical News published a fairly extensive article on the recommendations made by the VA Chiropractic Advisory Committee. The article states in part, "Chiropractic care at the Department of

Veterans Affairs could expand dramatically, if the final recommendations of the VA chiropractic advisory committee are followed."

A review of a portion of the 38 recommendations made by the committee to Secretary Anthony Principi bears out this statement. The Secretary does not have to adopt the recommendations, and there is already strong pressure on him by the bureaucrats and political medicine to water them down. However, the strong majority-vote from the committee and our own discussions with the Secretary give us hope of a favorable outcome. For more details regarding these recommendations, please view the following statements from Drs. Bill Morgan, Cynthia Vaughn and Rick McMichael:

<[http://www.acatoday.com/government/va/morgan\\_response.shtml](http://www.acatoday.com/government/va/morgan_response.shtml)>

<[http://www.acatoday.com/government/va/advisory\\_recommendation\\_comments.shtml](http://www.acatoday.com/government/va/advisory_recommendation_comments.shtml)>

<[http://www.acatoday.com/government/va/setrecord\\_vahcs.shtml](http://www.acatoday.com/government/va/setrecord_vahcs.shtml)>

### **EXPANDING CHIROPRACTIC IN THE TRICARE PROGRAM**

The ACA continues to solicit cosponsors for Rep. Ed Schrock's bipartisan bill (HR 3476) to extend chiropractic care benefits to military retirees, dependents and survivors through the Department of Defense's (DoD) TRICARE program. There are currently 27 members of Congress who have signed up as cosponsors. We urge that you contact your member of Congress and request that he become a cosponsor. For more information or to obtain a list of the current cosponsors, contact ACA's Government Relations office at 800-986-4636 or visit [www.ACAToday.com](http://www.ACAToday.com)

Dr. Edwards can be contacted by email at [JamesEdwards@JamesEdwards.com](mailto:JamesEdwards@JamesEdwards.com)