

## Lebanese chiropractors celebrate passing of legislation

Chiropractors in Lebanon are celebrating after legislation regulating the chiropractic profession was passed in parliament.

President of the Lebanese Chiropractic Association, Dr Haifa Abouassi, announced the historic achievement for chiropractic in May. The new law follows years of active lobbying by the Lebanese Chiropractic Association whose members have until now practiced in the absence of any form of regulation. The new law provides for chiropractic licensure in Lebanon with statutory recognition.

Passing of the chiropractic law follows years of lobbying, meetings, and phone calls with members of the Lebanese Medical Syndicate, lawyers, judges, ministers, and members of parliament. It has been officially announced that, having met worldwide chiropractic standards, native Lebanese chiropractors will be able to practice in Lebanon.

The passing of chiropractic legislation comes over 20 years after chiropractors rejected the terms of a law drafted by the Lebanese Ministry of Health and Welfare, which insisted on referral from a medical practitioner as well as prohibiting use of the title Doctor.

The new chiropractic law in Lebanon is a hard-won achievement. Since 2015, the Lebanese Chiropractic Association has engaged in countless hours of meetings, with numerous drafts being written and rewritten, objections from the Medical and Physiotherapist Syndicates being submitted, and strident objections from Lebanese University officials. The Lebanese uprising and the coronavirus pandemic added further challenges.

Licensure under the Act is restricted to Lebanese citizens who have undertaken a prescribed program of education and passed a colloquium examination conducted by the Ministry of Education in Lebanon. The Act makes specific reference to the evaluation, analysis and examination of biomechanical defects of the joints (which it defines as subluxations) in order to establish and perform the necessary treatment for correction. It further refers to the prescription of exercise and therapeutic advice related to the spine. Drug prescription and the performance of surgery is expressly forbidden in the Act and compliance with public health regulations regarding clinic facilities is



*Dr Haifa Abouassi, President, Lebanese Chiropractic Association*

described. Provisions for disciplinary sanction are also included. Practicing chiropractic without a license is outlawed under the Act.

Dr Abouassi commented, "Despite all these hurdles, a small group of chiropractors and their ardent supporters and enthusiasts never gave up. They continued lobbying and fighting until the law was finally passed without any specific stipulations or limitations. I am extremely proud and overjoyed to be surrounded by hard working and dedicated colleagues who labored tirelessly to bring the skill, care, effectiveness, and benefit of this unique profession to the people of our country."

