

INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENT

The Spanish Chiropractic Association (known in Spanish as the *Asociación Española de Quiropráctica*, or AEQ) was established in 1986 with the acquiescence of the **Spanish Ministry of Health**. It is the **only entity** that collectively represents chiropractors in Spain that have undertaken **university-level education** accredited by the European Council of Chiropractic Education, according to the guidelines of the European Higher Education Area.

Following the announcement by the Spanish Ministries of Health and Sciences of their “Health Protection Plan against Pseudotherapies” and misinformation about chiropractic that has been subsequently circulated, the AEQ respectfully submits the following **Institutional Statement**:

1. The World Health Organization (WHO)¹ defines chiropractic as a **healthcare profession**. It is independent of any other health profession and it is neither a therapy nor a pseudotherapy.
2. Chiropractic is statutorily recognised as a **healthcare profession in many European countries** including Portugal², France³, Italy⁴, Switzerland⁵, Belgium⁶, Denmark⁷, Sweden⁸, Norway⁹ and the United Kingdom¹⁰, as well as in the USA, Canada and Australia, to name a few.
3. Chiropractic members of the AEQ undergo **university-level training** of at least **5 years** full-time (300 ECTS points)¹¹. Chiropractic training is offered within prestigious institutions such as the Medical Colleges of the University of Zurich¹² and the University of Southern Denmark¹³.
4. Chiropractors are **spinal health care experts**. Chiropractors practice evidence-based, patient-centred **conservative interventions**, which include spinal manipulation, exercise prescription, patient education and lifestyle advice.
5. The use of these interventions for the treatment of **spine-related disorders**¹⁴ is consistent with guidelines and is supported by high quality **scientific evidence**, including multiple systematic reviews undertaken by the prestigious **Cochrane** collaboration^{15, 16, 17}.
6. The Global Burden of Disease study shows that spinal disorders are the **leading cause of years lived with disability worldwide**, exceeding depression, breast cancer and diabetes¹⁸.
7. Interventions used by chiropractors are recommended in the 2018 Low Back Pain series of articles published in *The Lancet*¹⁹ and **clinical practice guidelines** from Denmark²⁰, Canada²¹, the European Spine Journal²², American College of Physicians²³ and the Global Spine Care Initiative²⁴.
8. The AEQ **supports and promotes scientific research**, providing funding and resources for the development of **high quality research** in collaboration with institutions of high repute, such as Fundación Jiménez Díaz²⁵ and the University of Alcalá de Henares²⁶.
9. The AEQ strenuously promotes among its members the practice of **evidence-based, patient-centred care**, consistent with a biopsychosocial model of health.
10. The AEQ demands the highest standards of practice and professional ethics, by implementing among its members the **Quality Standard UNE-EN 16224** “Healthcare provision by chiropractors”, issued by the European Committee of Normalisation and ratified by AENOR^{27, 28}.
11. The AEQ urges the Spanish Government to **regulate chiropractic as a healthcare profession**. Without such legislation, citizens of Spain cannot be assured that they are protected from unqualified practitioners and will continue to face legal uncertainties and barriers to access an essential, high-quality, evidence-based healthcare service.

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