

LETTER

H.B. DANIELS

I Concur

WADE CHURCH

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June 16, 1960

Theodore Bryson, D. C.
Secretary-Treasurer
Arizona State Board of Chiropractic Examiners
2606 E. Grant Road
Tucson, Arizona

Dear Sir:

This letter is in reply to your communication of June 2, 1960, requesting an opinion from this office on the following inquiry:

"Is it permissible or legal for a Chiropractor to use the term 'Chiropractic Physician'?"

"Is it permissible or legal for a Chiropractor to use the term 'General Practitioner'?"

There are some cases which hold that a Chiropractor is not a physician and we cite Words and Phrases, Permanent Edition 32A.

This is not true, however, in Arizona. The term "Physician" is employed by the Arizona Legislature in a generic sense and it means a person skilled in the art of healing. Cite State v. Borah, 51 Ariz. 318, 76 P.2d. 757; Gates v. Kilcrease, 60 Ariz. 323, 188 P. 2d. 247.

To answer your first question, we must direct our attention to the provisions relating to the healing art. The Legislature and our A.R.S. § 32-1402, in prescribing the use of the term "physician", prescribes as follows:

"...Any person using the name 'physician,'... to induce others to believe that he is engaged in the treatment or diagnosis of diseases, injuries or defects of human beings, shall affix suitable words and abbreviations to his name, whenever used on signs or displays, clearly designating the particular type of practice for which such person is licensed to practice." (emphasis supplied).

Book

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It is within the power of the Legislature to classify Chiropractic as a branch of medicine or surgery. In Arizona, the practitioner of chiropractic is authorized to practice the healing art in a limited way - namely, adjustment by hand any articulation of the spinal column. A.R.S. § 32-929, as amended 1959; Gates v. Kilcrease, supra.

It is plain to see that a chiropractor may legally use the term "Chiropractic Physician" to induce persons to believe that he is engaged in the chiropractic field of medicine. The answer, therefore, to your first question is Yes.

As to Question No. 2, so long as the practitioner designates by words or abbreviation that he is a practitioner of chiropractic system of healing, there is no legal objection to his use of the term "General Practitioner".

In 70 C.J.S., Physicians and Surgeons, at page 815, with respect to the practice of medicine, it is said:

"...The terms 'practitioner' and 'physician' are often synonymous. It has been said that an osteopath, a homeopath, a chiropractor, a magnetic healer, and a naturopath are alike practitioners in the field of medicine."

Apparently it is alright for a chiropractor to use the term "practitioner" as well as the word "physician". We feel that he can also use the word "General Practitioner" so long as he designated the particular field of endeavor to which the general practice relates. On this basis, we answer the second question in the affirmative.

We trust this information is helpful to you. If we can be of further service, let us know.

Very truly yours,

WADE CHURCH
The Attorney General

H. B. DANIELS
Assistant Attorney General

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