[IMAGE]

The Film That Will Change the Face of Health Care

Coming to a theater near you: the truth about the medical / drug monopoly and a chance to reshape our health care priorities.

By Peter W. Crownfield

How enthusiastic is Jeff Hays, executive producer of the much-anticipated health care documentary originally titled "Medical, Inc." (recently retitled "Doctored") about his soon-to-be-released film? According to Hays, he's more proud of this documentary than any other film he's done. Exciting words from the man with "On Native Soil" and "Farenhype 9/11," among other works, to his credit. With "Doctored" now in its final cuts and the curtains about to be lifted, what better time to catch up with Hays in this exclusive interview?

Hays shares what he learned in making the film, what he hopes the audience will learn, and his thoughts on a medically dominated health care system where "drugs and surgery first, chiropractic last" is in desperate need of a priority reversal. The goal of the documentary, according to Hays: encourage the public to take charge of their health and consider alternatives to the traditional medical model – starting with chiropractic care.

Now that you've completed the documentary, what can you tell us about the final product, both in terms of what you've learned during the process and what you hope the viewer will learn? On a personal level, what I didn't know (and what I hope we can communicate to viewers) is that chiropractors have a philosophy of health that is uniquely needed today. We have just completely given ourselves over to the drug model, to the point that it's not even questioned; it's what you do.

medical inc - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark I always assumed chiropractors didn't prescribe drugs because they couldn't. I had no idea there might be something philosophically of value as to why they shouldn't. I was put on blood pressure medication 20 years ago and never skipped a day. It wasn't until I started this project that someone said to me, "Have you ever looked at why your body has high blood pressure?" Literally the thought had never occurred to me in 20 years. I just want to get chiropractors a seat at the table ... and I think we've really done that.

What is the primary focus / theme of the documentary – exposing the medical "monopoly" over health care, highlighting the dangers of drugs, emphasizing the value of chiropractic and drug-free options, or something else? The fundamental theme is that you have to be in charge of your own health – even if you don't want to. We followed several patients, one of whom has MS. He's 54 years old, he's the healthiest-looking guy you'll ever meet, and what you learn is that if you have a chronic disease, you can have a healthy body or an unhealthy body. Just because he has MS doesn't mean he isn't going to die of a heart attack, disease, stroke or cancer. You still have to take care of yourself, and in his case, even more so.

So, once you decide you have to take care of yourself, the question becomes, OK, how do I do that? One of the players on the field [chiropractic] has been cheated, and one [traditional medicine] has propelled itself to the top of the pile by cheating. And that's the drug-centered model of health that doesn't make anybody healthier.

That's where the story comes in – Is there a way of being healthier? Why isn't it more popular? Why don't we know more about it? It's because the deck has been stacked and people have cheated. And that's everything traditional medicine has done to extinguish this branch of medicine, of health, called chiropractic.

The way it's presented in the film is to consider chiropractic first, drugs second, surgery third. What happens with most people is drugs first, surgery second and if everything fails, then I might go to the chiropractor. [We need to get] chiropractic as a consideration that, as you examine the potential damage drugs and surgery do, it's a rational thought from a conservative standpoint: Why not try chiropractic first? There's so little to lose.

Surgery in particular seems out of control. It's an invasive procedure with inherent risks, and yet surgery rates – back surgery, for example – are increasing exponentially. It's just tragic. That's one thing we're adding a little more about in the film that we didn't have enough of in the early cuts – back surgery. I'm struck by the amount of horrendous damage [that is done].

This isn't in the film, but I have a granddaughter who, at 16 months old, had never walked. She would take a few steps and then collapse. I looked at her and her feet were all turned sideways. I talked to my daughter and said she should take her to Dr. [Craig] Buhler [Hays' chiropractor and longtime DC of the NBA's Utah Jazz].

She took her to see Buhler and she started walking *the next day*. Her pelvis, Buhler said, "clunked" into place; it was way out of alignment. This is just one family, just one event, but do you realize if she had entered the medical model, what the next steps would have been for her? A brace, physical therapy – gosh, maybe surgery – and instead, we're talking about a simple appointment to a doctor of chiropractic!

It's great that she got to the doctor she needed; I guess that's the bottom line: getting more people to the doctors they need, regardless of the condition. This is where I really think this film can make an impact. We've got to get this *country* to understand that they have options, and I think that now is the first time that everybody is mentally ready to look at alternatives – not only are patients questioning medical care, but every doctor in the country is questioning medical care and the way they're being forced to practice medicine. Patients are crammed into 12-minute appointments, and you've got really good doctors that know they're not practicing medicine anymore.

What are your plans for distribution of "Doctored"? We premiere the film Sept. 21 in New York at the Village East theater and then our L.A. premiere is a week later in Santa Monica, on the Promenade. Also on the 28th we will open in Dallas, Chicago, Atlanta, Austin [Texas] and Detroit.

My next 60 days, every waking moment, everything I do, is about filling up that New York theater every showing for the first week. Every theater in the country will be watching to see if it's successful in New York; if it's successful there, we may have the film open at 100 theaters across the country the next week.

We'll have articles in *The New York Times*, we'll [hopefully] have a review in the *Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*; but if we can then have a successful box office in New York and then follow it with strong box offices in those other seven cities, then we'll be a nationwide release. That's the number-one thing we can do to cross this chasm and get the film out to the public.

I'm going to set up a Web page (we'll link it to www.supportchiromovie.com) so people can go and pre-buy tickets for any of these early showings. Every conversation I have is about what do we have to do to blow the doors off the New York theater and these other theaters.

In the meantime, we'll also be releasing infographics and doing a lot of social media marketing; we'll be selling it from our Web site and also on Amazon and iTunes. We have so many marketing avenues available to us now that we didn't have even five years ago; there's no reason we can't rack up several million views on this film.

I would also love to track the number of chiropractic students created because of this film. ... I just think there are a lot of people who are going to look at this and go, *Wow, I'd like to spend my life doing that*. Imagine if out of several million viewers, we might be able to deliver 1,000 new chiropractic students.

There has been talk about the possibility of the film being nominated for an Academy Award. What are your thoughts?

The Academy Awards qualifications are that you have to have a qualifying run in both New York and L.A., and you have to be reviewed by either *The New York Times* or the *Los Angeles Times*. So we're doing a qualifying run, we doing everything we can to make sure we're reviewed. We are hiring an Academy Award publicist (in addition to a publicist for the film) whose job it is to promote us in the industry. ... We're taking it seriously enough that we're spending money on it; I just don't want to jinx it.

Peter W. Crownfield is the executive editor of *To Your Health*. Direct all comments and questions to editor -at- toyourhealth.com.

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