



## **Chiropractical Episode 10**

Guests: **Dr. Kelley Humphries**, Kathy Everett

**Chick Herbert:** Hi, everyone. Welcome to Chiropractical, brought to you by the Miles Away Business Credit Card. My name is Chick Herbert, and I am one of your co-hosts. Thank you for your tremendous response and support of our prior episodes. Chiropractical is a podcast about chiropractors, for chiropractors. At NCMIC our motto is we take care of our own, and this is just one more way that we demonstrate that.

**Melissa Knutson:** Hi, everyone. This is Melissa Knutson, also a co-host on Chiropractical. And through these episodes, we will bring you specific and actionable information you can apply to your practice. On today's episode, we're going to be talking to Dr. Humphries. Dr. Humphries is a member of the NCMIC Speakers Bureau, and we'll be covering the topic of sports chiropractic. What is it? And I'll tell you, it may be different than what you think it is. We'll also discover what is the role of a chiropractor when working with a sports team and how a chiropractor can best succeed as a part of that sports team. Also on today's episode, we have our Ask NCMIC segment with a question on EHR.

**Chick Herbert:** The primary mission of Chiropractical is to connect you with a wide range of leaders and topics that span the chiropractic profession and offer unique and relevant insights. One topic that continues to garner a lot of interest is sports medicine. Whether you are seeking to develop a bigger sports medicine niche in your practice, or you desire to treat athletes who are part of an organized sports team, there is a lot to understand regarding this broad topic. With that in mind, I am absolutely thrilled to welcome our next guest, Dr. Kelley Humphries. Dr. Humphries has a very diverse educational and professional background, which allows her to speak to this topic from several unique perspectives. She played four years of college basketball, was an assistant basketball coach, an adapted physical educator and a team doctor for world championship Olympic and Paralympic teams. Dr. Humphries earned her Doctor of Chiropractic degree from Texas Chiropractic College and served on the faculty of Logan University. And she is currently the executive director of [USA Para Powerlifting](#). Dr. Humphries, welcome to Chiropractical.

**Dr. Humphries:** Thanks again for having me. I'm flattered and honored that you wanted to include me.

**Chick Herbert:** You've got a really unique background, lots of unique experiences, and I know our audience is going to gain a great deal of insight from you. To begin with, can you talk a little bit about how you got into the sports medicine space?



**Dr. Humphries:** It's the cliché story. I was an athlete and I was the athlete that was always hurt. I played college basketball. I was recruited to play the three guard. I stand all of five foot seven, even though my athlete profile said that I was five foot nine, they stretched that. But I guess my coach saw something in me and decided that they wanted me to play the power forward. I ended up playing that position, starting in that position and excelling in that position. But I was undersized in that position so I was always hurt. So through my own experiences being injured and then some additional opportunities that I had sports was where my heart was.

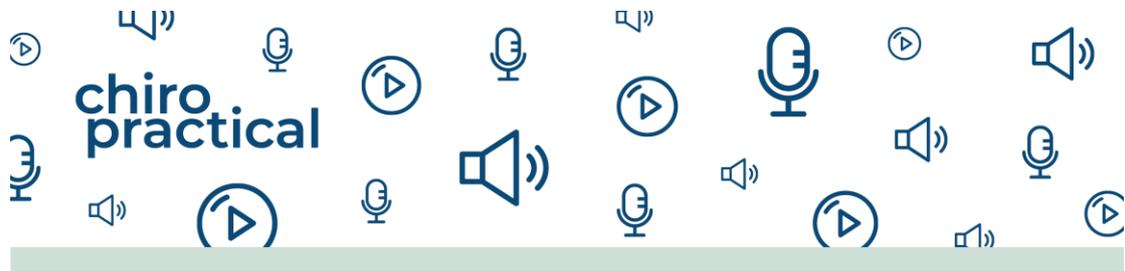
What led to chiropractic is not a traditional story. In fact, I was just not ready for it. I didn't really think it was all that great, but I saw how the profession interacted with its patients and especially with individuals with disabilities and I figured that it was the best place for me, what I want it to do.

**Chick Herbert:** If I recall correctly, you actually were planning to go to med school. What was the change in path?

**Dr. Humphries:** I had a mentor who had a conversation with me about how I wanted to interact with my patients and what I wanted my day-to-day life to look like. This mentor was a medical doctor and in her wisdom, she recommended that I follow a chiropractor that was doing something very similar to what I had described to her. I had the honor of following a chiropractor that was working with the team and had a practice that they viewed to be a sports practice, and it looked just like what I wanted to do. Through becoming a chiropractor, I saw that not only would I be able to have a clinical practice, but I would also have some other opportunities opened up for me that I might not necessarily have the freedom to step into if I hadn't gone the medical route. That is saying a lot, because I have a very strong allopathic background and very much respect and understand the medical profession of medical doctors. That's what I wanted to do. So for me to change gears like that is a pretty big deal.

**Chick Herbert:** So there's a lot of interest in the chiropractic profession about sports medicine. It's a big, broad category. I assume it's not all glitz and glory and standing on the sidelines and having confetti rain down on you with the team. Can you talk a little bit about what it is?

**Dr. Humphries:** That's a great question and I'm really happy that you asked it because even now I don't really know if there's a great answer for it. I think that being a sports chiropractor, it's personal to the practitioner, it depends on how you want to practice in the population that you want to treat. If you want to be the person that's on the sideline at the big game, with the confetti raining down, please understand that's like 0.5% of your time.



It's a very, very small amount of your time. Those chiropractors, those healthcare professionals in general, whether they're a chiropractor, whether they're an orthopedic surgeon, even the athletic trainers, that's 0.5% of what they do. The majority of the work that they do is in their respective clinics.

The one-on-one times that they have with the population that they're servicing, it's not glitz and glamor, it's the day-to-day grind, is the best way I know how to put it. And in sports everything's changing. The only thing that's consistent in sport is change. If you want to view yourself as a sports chiropractor, I think probably the best way to view yourself is as somebody that's agile and somebody that can adapt quickly and effectively and efficiently as well. But also staying true to the way that not only you want to practice, but being insightful enough to know if the way that you want to practice actually matches the population that you're actually trying to target. I wish that I could give you a one word answer for it, but it's not as simple as some people think. I think that we're doing a disservice to our profession if we make it that simple. We have a lane, we should stay in that lane, but it really is personal to the practitioner.

**Chick Herbert:** When you had talked about who you treat and where you treat them. Can you say a little bit more about that in terms of helping others who don't have the clarity gain some clarity?

**Dr. Humphries:** The way that I practice being a sports chiropractor is I have that 0.5% where I'm on a plane, I'm traveling with a team, we're going to a destination, we've got a competition, we've got an event. I'm there with the team on ground. Most of the time, not in the best of circumstances. I am there for the snapshot of care that they need in that moment.

The way that I practice, I am not the person that runs out on the field in an emergency situation. It's not my purview. That's not why I'm brought along for most of these events. However, I understand and recognize the need if there is something like that that needs to occur. The other ways that I've practiced in the past is I've been in a clinical setting, very traditional clinical setting, where the emphasis in what we do is if we have somebody that they consider themselves an athlete and we consider them an athlete per what our definition of the population looks like, we're doing their palliative care. If they're in pain, we're getting them out of pain. But then after that, we're taking the steps to make sure that we're correcting whatever the issue was, whether that's through our manual adjustments, whether that's through our soft tissue techniques, there's a lot of conversation around rehabilitative exercises and there is a ton, a ton, of interdisciplinary care that you do when you work in the world of sports.



You're not a lone ranger, you're not on an island. That athlete has a community around them, and you have to be understanding and supportive and find your role within that community.

**Chick Herbert:** With so many people in that community and supporting that athlete, I assume it's important to have clarity of where your role begins and ends versus someone else that's part of that care team.

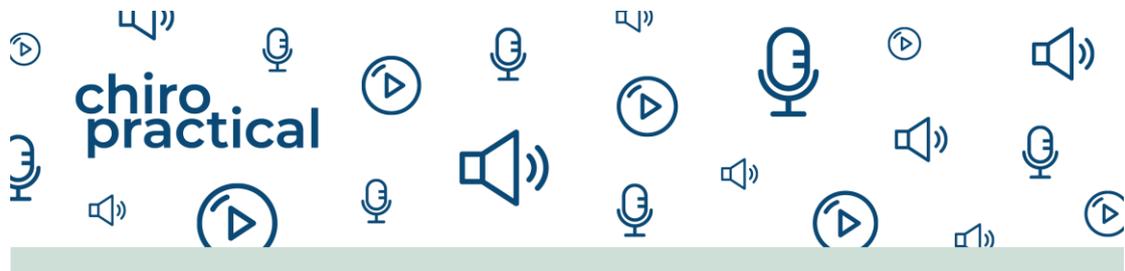
**Dr. Humphries:** Yes exactly. I think that that by far is the most important thing. When people view boundaries in a negative way, I view them as opportunities. Understand your boundaries and then once you understand what your boundaries are, you understand that as a chiropractor, we're kind of a bridge between a lot of healthcare disciplines. We can speak so many different languages, we just don't know that we can speak them. And that's the beauty of working with a sports team because you learn your boundaries. And once you learn your boundaries, you learn the other languages. Once you understand those other languages, you're able to speak them and kind of be this all-encompassing bridge, which was really cool to experience. Understanding how you fit in that athlete's community is by far the most important thing and the most valuable thing that you can provide for that athlete because at the end of the day, if you're a sports chiropractor, you are putting the athlete first, not you, the athlete, and that's all there is to it.

**Chick Herbert:** Is it safe to say that the role and responsibilities – that's not a one size fits all where any team, this is what the role is. It really varies by care team and just because you've operated one way in a certain environment, doesn't mean that you're going to operate that way.

**Dr. Humphries:** That's hitting the nail right on the head. You might find yourself being everything to one team and you might find yourself being one thing to another team, or half a thing to another team. And it goes back to being agile and being able to adapt and being secure enough within yourself and then your skillset to be able to take on that big of a role, or to not take on that big of a role.

**Chick Herbert:** This is my words and you can disagree, but balance your competence and confidence, but not have too big of an ego where you feel like you're getting your wings clipped and how dare they do that to me.

**Dr. Humphries:** Exactly. I think one of the most meaningful experiences I've had in my career was fresh out of chiropractic school, getting an opportunity of a lifetime in my point of view and being put in a very small corner with very, very strict guidelines and rules. And at the time, my ego felt as if I was being undervalued and underutilized. But what I have learned is that is probably the most invaluable thing that I've ever had happened to me because I realized my ego felt that way, because I didn't have competence in my skill set yet. I didn't



have confidence in what I could do. And I didn't feel that I was competent enough to adjust to what they thought I should be doing versus what I thought I should be doing. And now I can move in and out of situations and adjust accordingly and be a meaningful member of that team. And you don't have to be the leader or the boss all the time. Sometimes they just need you to be there.

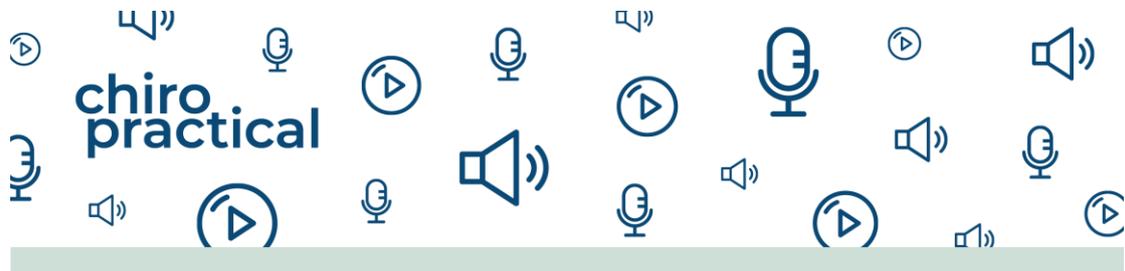
**Chick Herbert:** That's really insightful and be there and have the mindset of how can you serve the athlete back to your point? It's less about being you centric and more about being the athlete and what's best for them, which is really interesting. I think that's a mindset. You mentioned agility sounds like good communication is important, not having a big ego, but having confidence and competence in what you do and all really important things. Is part of the role of a chiropractor in this space – are there some people that specialize in that rehabilitation piece versus future performance acceleration?

**Dr. Humphries:** There are a lot of different specialties. I've been in situations where I've been the person that this person's in pain, get them out of pain, and then it stops. There's nothing after that they're in pain, get them out of pain. All right. I can do that.

There's also been situations where this person was in pain and I want to prevent them from being in pain again. That means that I have to put on a different hat, right? So the mindset of just doing our manual therapies, that changes, they're not in pain, there's no need for that right then and there, we need to do a different type of assessment and come up with a longer term plan.

Having an understanding of rehab and understanding those principles, I have found for me in the way that I practice to be invaluable. But again, that goes back to the role that you're playing within the organization. Right. If, if the team has somebody that specializes in that, me having a knowledge of that, not necessarily being the person that's executing it, but me having knowledge of that allows me to have a very meaningful conversation with that professional so that that professional understands what I did to get the person out of pain and what they need to do to keep the person out of pain.

And that's what I talk about when I say that we can be some pretty effective bridge builders and interdisciplinary care. Another example is there might be an issue where somebody is in pain and it might be a musculoskeletal issue, which is where we live. But the level of pain is such that we need help from a medical doctor or we need to consult, or we need to refer to the medical doctor. Being able to have a meaningful conversation with the medical doctor, to where you're sharing your experience and your knowledge, not dictating and same with the other experience, allows for the medical doctor to better service that athlete and that patient. Again, the ability and the opportunity to build a bridge.



**Chick Herbert:** Do you think that you enjoy this work and the specific niche that you're in because of the team element, being a former athlete and on a team sport?

**Dr. Humphries:** It's always nice to know that you're not alone. A lot of times and our profession, you feel like you're by yourself, you feel like you have to go out there and you have to make this work for you.

When you're constantly in that mindset, you kind of forget the spirit in which you started this journey and being part of a team being in the sports world, you're always part of a team and you never really feel like you're alone and you can lean on people and it's okay to be vulnerable. It's okay to say you wrong. It's okay to say, I don't know. It's okay to say help.

I hope that even outside of the world of sport, that has a profession, we're able to continue to cultivate that type of culture, particularly for our new graduates. You know, you're not alone. It's not you against the world. You're not fighting by yourself. We're all here to help and, and you can lean on other people.

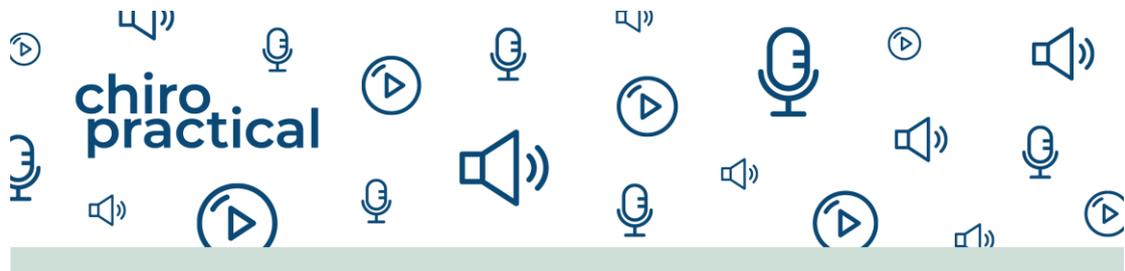
**Chick Herbert:** You speak to students in your work at Logan and other places. What guidance or advice do you give them as they express interest in sports medicine and chiropractic within sports medicine?

**Dr. Humphries:** The biggest piece of advice I would get is to take a moment to truly have a deep and meaningful conversation with yourself and ask yourself, what does a sports chiropractor look like to you?

Okay. And does that resonate with what your personal mission, vision and values for your life are? If it doesn't, then that's not the role you want to take. You don't want to step into that. Define it first and then measure it against who you've established that you are. I think that'll help. A lot of students that are graduating determine if this is the world they want to be in.

So many people jump on sports medicine in general because it's glamorous. So they think it's more than that. And I love what I do. I really do love what I do, but understand that as the medical provider. I'm the low man on the totem pole. People don't want to see me. They don't want to be dealing with me because if they're dealing with me, there's something wrong with the athlete. If that's not the life you kind of want to lead, sometimes you have to think about those things. That's my biggest piece of advice.

Just breathe, breathe, then define it and then measure it against your own personal mission, vision, and values, and how you want your career and your life to look when you're done with all of this.



**Chick Herbert:** Really insightful. What's the largest athlete you've ever treated? I mean, you're an embellished five, nine. I'm thinking you're probably really five two, because you're not even five seven, like you said, but we'll ignore that. But what's the biggest athlete you've treated?

**Dr. Humphries:** One-oh-seven seven plus kilos male. Compared to most, I guess when people think about when they think about sports chiropractors, I am small. That doesn't mean anything. There is a reason why we're bio mechanistic. We specialize in kinesiology, which is the movement of the body. It's an applied biomechanics to the body. I understand force vectors. I understand the anatomy that I'm working with. I understand angles. I understand how to use my patient's body to my advantage. So I have no problem with adjusting big people.

**Chick Herbert:** You've got para-Olympic experience as well as Olympic experience on the care team. How do you define an athlete?

**Dr. Humphries:** An athlete is somebody that does a very specialized movement very, very, very well. That's the way I define it. And movement means a lot of things in our world. Talk to any chiropractor. They'll talk to you about all types of movement. To me, an athlete is somebody that just has this gift, this ability to do a very, very, very specific movement or action better than anybody else.

Logan University is the home of USA Para Powerlifting, and I am very proud executive director of that sport. If there is anything in my life that I could say that I will take to my grave as probably my greatest feat in this world, it is being the executive director of this sport, working with these athletes and this coaching staff that we have. These athletes are amazing. They can bench press up two and over three times their body weight with no use of their legs and no use of their core, all upper body strength.

That pretty much sums up an athlete. Right? Most people look at that and they're like, how is that possible? Because they're an athlete working with this organization and USA Para Powerlifting as a whole and how they approach their athletes and how we build our community around our athletes and watching these athletes do what they do.

There's no way that anybody will ever be able to tell me that you can specifically define an athlete based off of what they look like, their gender, their level of ability. Come hang out with us for a little bit. We'll show you some pretty cool athletes.

**Chick Herbert:** That's such special and important work. You are well-versed and a great asset to that team, as well as the Olympic team. It's really been a pleasure to have you on. Is there any closing thought that you have that you think our listeners need to know?



**Dr. Humphries:** Enjoy the journey. I remember when I was really trying to figure out if this was what I wanted to do and it's scary and it's hard and it's not glamorous. I understand that. But even in the times that it's not glamorous, it's probably the most fun, most exciting, most fulfilling thing I think that I've ever done in my life. So just breathe and enjoy the process. It's all good.

**Chick Herbert:** That's great advice. It's always a special thing when you can get your passion and your competencies and a need in society to line up and operate in your sweet zone. And that's terrific. Really enjoyed talking to you and appreciate you spending time with us.

**Dr. Humphries:** Thank you again for having me. It really was a pleasure being with you today.

**Mike Whitmer:** This is Mike Whitmer with NCMIC. Each episode of Chiropractical, we are taking your questions and having experts provide answers. We call this segment Ask NCMIC. Today's question focuses on electronic health records. We've asked Kathy Everett to join us. Kathy is a risk management expert from NCMIC. She's a certified risk manager, certified professional in health risk management and has her associates in risk management. She knows all about health records. Kathy, welcome to chiropractical.

**Kathy Everett:** Thank you, Mike. I am pleased to be here with you.

**Mike Whitmer:** Kathy, some doctors I've talked to think that an EHR will fix a lot of practice issues by being a quicker, more efficient way to handle patient information, but a lot rides on how an office uses the system. What is the most common issue doctors have with an EHR system that poses risk to the practice and its patients?

**Kathy Everett:** The one driver of malpractice claims that arise from EHR, all surround documentation. So yes, while an EHR can make it quicker and more efficient for handling patient information, it can also have some negative side effects depending on how that information is handled.

And documentation is important and getting it right the first time. So while your EHR can provide you an opportunity to be more efficient, through things like copy and paste for example, or utilizing templates or auto population of fields, these can also have a downside. The practitioner is responsible for all the information in the records. So therefore it is important that information be reviewed each time that record is opened.

So let's take copy and paste. Copy and paste has gotten a bad rap, but as long as it's used judiciously, it can be effective. It is a time-saver and it can be efficient, but it needs to be reviewed each time it is copied and paste. It needs to be identified that it is copied, so that information is not carrying forth information that is not current.



Auto population of fields. These are meant definitely for improving the efficiency of adding information, but again, that needs to be used judiciously to make sure that what is being populated is the correct information.

Templates are widely used and EHRs and templates are predesigned statements such as - I've seen them used for informed consent - but each template needs to be modified for each individual patient at each individual visit. That not being done, it's very easy to see the template reuse each time. And that is going to set off in a heartbeat what a plaintiff is reading in your records. Those are some of the things that can take you from being super-efficient and managing that patient data to really tripping you up.

**Mike Whitmer:** Thank you, Kathy. If you found this topic interesting, please join us in May when we'll take a deep dive into issues related to electronic health records on the podcast and in a new webinar. If you have a question you would like us to address on the Ask NCMIC please shoot us an email. [AskNCMIC@ncmic.com](mailto:AskNCMIC@ncmic.com).

**Chick Herbert:** Well, Melissa, another great guest and another inspiring conversation. I always walk away from these things energized and excited about new ideas and feel fortunate that we have the opportunity to connect with so many great people.

**Melissa Knutson:** I agree, Chick. We're incredibly fortunate and I'm excited to share additional opportunities with our listeners. If you liked what you heard today, and you want to learn a little bit more go to our show notes. We have a great webinar coming up on April 15th at 12:30 CST. At that webinar, Dr. Humphries will cover a variety of topics. Two highlights to consider is how can chiropractors work with athletes with disabilities, and working with athletes outside of the clinical setting.

**Chick Herbert:** Thank you as always. We appreciate you listening. You can see the show notes and those can be found at [NCMIC.com/Chiropractical](https://ncmic.com/Chiropractical).

So check that out. And in the past, we have asked for you to please take time to review and rate the podcast. And that may sound self-serving, but those reviews are very meaningful because it will allow us to reach more people, people as they go out and search for podcasts. So please, if you are so inclined, we would love to have you do a review in addition to providing a rating from the star perspective.

So with that, we look forward to talking to you again next month. And in the meantime

**Melissa Knutson:** Take care and stay well.