

Brief report to the Foundation for the Education of Chiropractors in Switzerland

Musculoskeletal Epidemiology Research Group: Annual Report 2024-25

Author: PD Dr. Cesar A Hincapié DC PhD

Date: 22 August 2025

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the foundation, its president and board of directors, as well as all donors for the financial support we have received. Without this important investment and financial commitment, our work and development would not be possible. We are sincerely grateful for the support, and trust that our work has brought and will continue to bring added value to the foundation, its sponsors and Swiss chiropractic. Below is a brief report of activities of the Musculoskeletal Epidemiology Research Group over the past year:

Academic:

- PD Dr. Cesar Hincapié received a status faculty appointment as Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at the University of Toronto Dalla Lana School of Public Health, 15 Oct 2024
- Hosted the 19th International Forum for Back and Neck Pain Research in Primary Care ([IBNP Forum 2025](#)) — a premier scientific event of clinical and public health research worldwide. Extraordinary success and excellent outreach event—250 participants from 25 countries; 42 chiropractors (4 Swiss DCs) attended (24-27 Jun 2025)
- Hosted a scientific meeting of 30 leading researchers for Lancet Low Back Pain Series II Update (22-23 Jun 2025)
- Group relocation – Now 100% at UZH Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Prevention Institute as of 1 Aug 2025
- Invited to apply for the title of Adjunct Professor (*Titularprofessor*) and the right to confer a PhD (*Promotionsrecht*) at the Faculty of Medicine of UZH, 1 Aug 2025

Team: Our group currently consists of myself, **8 trainees** (2 PhD students [Javier Muñoz Laguna DC MSc, Clara Gieseke Lopes PT MSc], 1 early clinician-scientist working towards Habilitation [Léonie Hofstetter DCM], 5 students [4 chiropractic: Lea Rohner, Nathalie Schweyckart, Nathan Schmid (*Doktorarbeiten*), Matthias Schürmann (*Masterarbeit*); and 1 ETH master's thesis: Viktorija Kendjel]], and **2-4 other team members**: Michelle Suppiger (SALuBRITY trial coordinator), Nicola Schmid, Kai von Känel, Felix Tran, Ilario Barizzi (*Zivildienst*).

Publications: Between August 2024 and July 2025, we published 10 original papers (2 as first author; 6 as last author) in high-quality peer-reviewed journals.¹⁻¹⁰ We currently have 4 manuscripts in preparation and review.

Presentations: Between August 2024 and July 2025, our team delivered: 5 workshops, 3 invited presentations, 5 oral presentations, 7 poster presentations, 1 visiting professor lecture at the University of Toronto, Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Key conferences and meetings: Wennberg International Collaborative (Oslo, Sep 2024), UZH Population Research Conference (Zurich, Jan 2025), Chiropractic Academy for Research Leadership (Odense, May 2025), World Federation of Chiropractic (Copenhagen, May 2025), International Back and Neck Pain Research Forum (Davos, Jun 2025).

Funding: IBNP Forum 2025 was awarded a total of 53,000 CHF in sponsorship funding (**Hincapié as applicant**) from the Swiss National Science Foundation (20,000 CHF), Neuroscience Research Australia (13,000 CHF), ChiroSuisse (10,000 CHF), Swiss Osteopathy Science Foundation (5,000 CHF), UZH Alumni Foundation (3,000 CHF), and Physioswiss (2,000 CHF). Currently, under consideration is a project grant application (275,000 CHF) with Suva, to investigate the incidence of and causal risk factors for occupational elbow tendinopathy using Suva data.

Supervision:

- PhDs and Habilitations: Ongoing – Javier Muñoz Laguna DC MSc, Clara Gieseke Lopes PT MSc, Léonie Hofstetter DCM; Defended – Rahim Lalji DC PhD (Nov 2023)
- Doktorarbeiten: Ongoing – Nathan Schmid MChiroMed, Nathalie Schweyckart MChiroMed, Sergio Sivec Muñiz MMed, Lea Rohner DCM; Approved – Astrid Kurmann DCM (Apr 2025), Daniela Kroismayr DCM (Apr 2025), Corina Ryf DCM (Dec 2024)
- Masterarbeiten: Ongoing – Matthias Schürmann BMed; Approved – Viktorija Kendjel (Aug 2025), Jael Kauth MChiroMed (Mar 2024), Michelle Fontana MChiroMed (Dec 2023), Corina Ryf MChiroMed (Oct 2022)

Sincerely,

PD Dr. Cesar Hincapié DC PhD

References

1. Unterfrauner I, Muñoz Laguna J, Serra-Burriel M, Burgstaller JM, Uçkay I, Farshad M, **Hincapié CA**. Fusion versus decompression alone for lumbar degenerative spondylolisthesis and spinal stenosis: a target trial emulation with index trial benchmarking. *Eur Spine J*. 2024 Sep 21;33(11):4281–4291.
2. Hofstetter L, Fontana M, Tomlinson GA, **Hincapié CA**. A Bayesian analysis integrating expert beliefs to better understand how new evidence ought to update what we believe: a use case of chiropractic care and acute lumbar disc herniation with early surgery. *BMC Med Res Methodol*. 2024 Nov 15;24(1):281.
3. **Hincapié CA**. Arthritis burden projections: a call to action in Australia and beyond. *The Lancet Rheumatology*. 2024 Dec 5;S2665991324003497.
4. **Hincapié CA**, Kroismayr D, Hofstetter L, Kurmann A, Cancelliere C, Raja Rampersaud Y, Boyle E, Tomlinson GA, Jadad AR, Hartvigsen J, Côté P, Cassidy JD. Incidence of and risk factors for lumbar disc herniation with radiculopathy in adults: a systematic review. *Eur Spine J*. 2025 Jan;34(1):263–294. PMCID: PMC11754359
5. Muñoz Laguna J, Kurmann A, Hofstetter L, Nyantakyi E, Braun J, Clack L, Bang H, Farshad M, Foster NE, Puhan MA, **Hincapié CA**, SALuBRITY Blinding Clinician Group. “Which treatment do you believe you received?” A randomised blinding feasibility trial of spinal manual therapy. *Chiropr Man Therap*. 2025 Jan 14;33(1):4.
6. Unterfrauner I, Laguna JM, **Hincapié CA**. Answer to the Letter to the Editor of R.D. Iyer concerning “Fusion versus decompression alone for lumbar degenerative spondylolisthesis and spinal stenosis: a target trial emulation with index trial benchmarking” by I. Unterfrauner, et al. (*Eur Spine J* [2024]: doi: 10.1007/s00586-024-08495-0. *Eur Spine J*. 2025 Feb 14;1–2.
7. Muñoz Laguna J, **Hincapié CA**. Methodological issues with sham-controlled acupuncture trial. *JAMA Internal Medicine*. 2025 May 12 [cited 2025 May 12]; Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2025.0164>
8. Pfister M, Ratti F, Gores GJ, Lesurtel M, Chiche L, Ebata T, Ardiles V, Valle JW, Heimbach JK, Braconi C, Bruix J, Aldrighetti L, Clavien PA, Consensus4pCCA Collaborative. Recommendations on perihilar cholangiocarcinoma. the Milan jury-based consensus. *Ann Surg*. 2025 Jun 6; PMID: 40478744
9. Mathieu J, Beauséjour M, Châtillon CÉ, O’Shaughnessy J, Tétreau C, **Hincapié CA**, Schweinhardt P, Descarreux M, Marchand AA. Diagnostic and management concordance between chiropractors and neurosurgeons for patients with low back pain. *Sci Rep*. 2025 Jul 2;15(1):23248.
10. Hofstetter L, Schveyckart N, Seiler C, Brand C, Rosella LC, Farshad M, Puhan MA, **Hincapié CA**. Predicting patient outcomes and risk for revision surgery after hip and knee replacement surgery: study protocol for a comparison of modelling approaches using the Swiss National Joint Registry (SIRIS). *Diagn Progn Res*. 2025 Aug 4;9(1):16. PMCID: PMC12320300