

Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy Naturopathy

April 30, 2007

Update: Regulation of Naturopathic Medicine under the RHPA

The Standing Committee on Social Policy completed public hearings on Bill 171 on Tuesday, April 24, 2007. Chair Angela Moore, ND and Public Member Marianne Park appeared before the Committee on behalf of the BDDT-N. The Board also made a written submission to the Committee with respect to Schedule P, the proposed Naturopathy and Homeopathy Act, 2006. A copy of the submission has been posted on the Board's website www.BoardofNaturopathicMedicine.on.ca in the Government Affairs section.

There were over 200 applications to appear before the Standing Committee, of which 30 were accepted. The Board was pleased to have the opportunity to address the Committee to express support for the regulation of naturopathic medicine under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA) and to be able to explain directly to Committee members why amendments to Schedule P are still required.

The Committee will conduct its clause-by-clause review of Bill 171 on May 7 at which time amendments to the Bill will be proposed by Committee members, debated and voted on. We anticipate that the amended Bill will be read out of Committee and given Third Reading in mid May and Royal Assent will follow shortly thereafter. It is not clear at this time when the Transition Council will be fully operational.

As you can see from our written submission, the Board identified five priority areas of concern and asked the Committee to make the necessary amendments. Those areas of concern are:

1. Ensuring that NDs continue to have access to the natural substances they currently use in the treatment of patients.
2. Correcting the wording of the authorized act of "communicating a diagnosis" in order to be consistent with other professions, to achieve consistency with the practice of naturopathic medicine and to ensure that the wording is not unnecessarily or unintentionally limiting.
3. Protecting the title "Naturopathic Doctor" and any abbreviations or variations thereof such as "ND", or equivalents in other languages.
4. Legally continuing the Board as the new College to ensure regulatory continuity. What this means in practice is that the existing Board, its assets and liabilities and its employees, plus its legal ability to enforce outstanding discipline decisions and to continue action on current complaints, would be folded into the Transition Council and ultimately into the new College of Naturopathy and Homeopathy.

5. Ensuring the ability of NDs to continue to perform the controlled act of Acupuncture under the *Regulated Health Professions Act*.

During our many discussions with Ministry officials and with the Minister's staff, we were repeatedly assured that it is the government's wish to continue the scope of practice that NDs now have under the *Drugless Practitioners Act*. We were also repeatedly assured that NDs would have access to laboratory testing within their statutory scope of practice.

There is much work that still has to be done. Nevertheless, completion of hearings by the Standing Committee is a major step towards regulation of NDs under the RHPA.

The Board is continuing its public relations plan to better inform residents of Ontario about naturopathic medicine and what it will mean for the profession and its patients to be regulated under the RHPA. The next two "Ask a Professional" programs on AM 740 sponsored by the Board, will be broadcast at 12:30 p.m. on May 13th and June 3rd.