

Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy Naturopathy

June 12, 2007

Naturopathy Act Receives Royal Assent!

On Monday, June 4, 2007, Bill 171 (the Health Systems Improvement Act) of which the new *Naturopathy Act* is a part, obtained Royal Assent, a major step towards the goal of regulating naturopathic medicine under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA). Royal Assent, which is largely ceremonial, occurs after a Bill has successfully passed Third Reading in the Legislature and can only take place when the Legislature is in session. Since dissolution of the Legislature occurred early on June 5th and will be in effect until after the election in October, Royal Assent occurred sooner than we anticipated. This means the goal the BDDT-N and the profession have been working towards since the early 1990s is a major step closer to achievement. The BDDT-N marked this achievement by issuing a press release, a copy of which is available on the Board's website at www.BoardofNaturopathicMedicine.on.ca.

Although some parts of Bill 171 came into legal force and effect coincident with Royal Assent, the majority of the Bill, including most of the new *Naturopathy Act*, awaits proclamation by Executive Council (i.e. Cabinet) before it has legal force and effect. **It is important that Registrants understand that the new *Naturopathy Act* is not yet law and NDs continue to be governed by the BDDT-N under the provisions of the *Drugless Practitioners Act* until the new Act is proclaimed.**

The next step will be the establishment of the Transition Council, which will put the necessary regulations in place including those required for performance of the Controlled Acts. The Transition Council will also carry out all of the other tasks necessary for regulation under the new Act and the RHPA. Proclamation of the entire *Naturopathy Act* will follow. The Ministry has indicated no timelines for setting up the Transition Council, but we hope it will be operational by early Fall. The work of the Transition Council is expected to take between 18 and 24 months, meaning that the new *Naturopathy Act* could be proclaimed in its entirety by mid 2009. We acknowledge, however, that there is still much work to be done.

As indicated in the media release, the Board is very pleased that a number of the revisions that we recommended were incorporated into the final version of the legislation. The Board devoted considerable time since the Bill was tabled in December 2006 to working with the Ministry and other stakeholders to make improvements in the legislation.

A copy of the new legislation may be obtained from the website of the Ontario Legislature at: http://www.ontla.on.ca/bills/bills-files/38_Parliament/Session2/b171rep.pdf. Schedule P begins on page 150 of the bill itself or page 170 of the document. Registrants are encouraged to contact the Board office with questions or concerns relating to this major achievement in the objective of including naturopathic doctors under the RHPA.