

# Complaints Process

---

(Revised November 2009)

The Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy – Naturopathy (BDDT-N) is responsible for investigating complaints received by the Board against Registrants (naturopathic doctors) regarding their conduct or actions. When a complaint against a Registrant is received, it is investigated to determine if a breach of the Board’s Standards of Practice, policies or guidelines has occurred. A complaint must be made in writing in order for it to be investigated. Following are the steps involved in the complaints process:

- A written complaint against a Registrant is received.
- If the Registrant is a member of another health profession, the Complaint may be forwarded to the appropriate regulatory agency.
- A letter is sent to the Complainant, outlining the process and indicating that the Board will obtain the patient file from the ND.
- The Registrant is asked to submit the original patient file to the Board.
- Following receipt of the original patient file, the Registrant is provided with a copy of the Complaint and is invited to respond.
- The Complainant is forwarded a copy of the Registrant’s response and invited to provide further comment.
- If new issues are introduced in the Complainant’s response, the Registrant is provided with a copy and is invited to submit any additional comments.
- The Complaints Resolution Committee (CRC) reviews all information considered relevant (including Complaint, Registrant’s response(s), patient files, etc.).
- Interviews may be conducted to gather further information.
- An Expert may be retained to review all significant documentary evidence.
- The CRC prepares and submits to the Board its written recommendation, which includes a summary of the Complaint, pertinent evidence and a discussion of its reasoning.
- The Board considers the Complaint and the CRC’s recommendations and determines whether the matter can be resolved at this stage or whether it should be referred for a disciplinary hearing.
- Both the Complainant and the Registrant are advised of the Board’s decision, and are provided with a copy of the Board’s Reasons for Decision.
- If the case is referred for a disciplinary hearing, the Board establishes a hearing date and issues a Notice of Hearing, which is delivered to the Registrant.

## External Reviewer

The External Reviewer is a naturopathic doctor appointed by the Board for the purpose of reviewing identified concerns or anonymous complaints. The External Reviewer acts

independently of the Board and is not a member of the Complaints Resolution Committee.

The CRC or the Board may identify issues that are not in the form of a complaint to be referred to the External Reviewer who, after review, may initiate a formal complaint to the Board.

If the Board receives an anonymous complaint containing allegations that may be sufficiently serious as to warrant an investigation, the Board will refer the complaint to the External Reviewer. The External Reviewer will review the complaint and make a determination as to whether a formal complaint should be initiated. If a formal complaint is filed, the Complaints Process outlined above is followed.

*Note:* A complainant, or a Registrant who is the subject of a complaint, has the right to be represented by counsel at his/her own expense.

See the Board's **Rules of Procedure** for information pertaining to Disciplinary Hearings.