

Policy for Limited Naturopathic Practice

Definition of Limited Naturopathic Practice

A naturopathic doctor who limits her/his scope of practice to include only one or a few treatment modalities, i.e.: acupuncture/chinese medicine; homeopathy

Definition of Naturopathic Medicine Scope of Practice

"the practice of naturopathic medicine is the promotion of health, the assessment of the physical and mental condition of an individual, and the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions through education, common diagnostic procedures, and the integrated use of natural therapies and natural medicines that promote the individual's inherent self-healing processes."

(Joint submission by BDDT-N/ OAND to HPRAC, September 2000)

It has been this Board's policy to refer to the above scope statement in all of our communications with the public and with the government. This scope is also used by the OAND and is similar to scope statements in other licensed jurisdictions. It is our intent to project, and it is the public's perception that naturopathic medicine is an integrated use of a number of treatment modalities.

In dealing with complaints of misconduct, malpractice, or incompetence, the Complaints Committee and the Disciplinary Committee must refer to the above scope statement to analyze what treatments were given, what treatments were possible and what treatments were not given. The Committees also have to consider whether the patient was informed of their options.

Confusion on the part of the public and resultant complaints to the Board has arisen when registrants limit their practice to one, or a few modalities. The following policy will outline a Registrant's obligations with regards to informed consent if they wish to have a limited practice.

POLICY:

- 1) Naturopathic doctors in Ontario are required to take a health history and perform an appropriate physical examination prior to beginning a course of treatment.
- 2) If a naturopathic doctor restricts her/his practice to one or a few treatment modalities, this information should be clearly posted or supplied to all patients prior to the commencement of care.
- 3) Informed consent must be obtained from the patient prior to commencing treatment. If the practitioner is restricting her/his practice to a certain modality, e.g.: homeopathy, the patient must be made fully aware of this as part of their informed consent. The patient must be made aware of other treatment options both naturopathic and by other health professionals. Please refer to Informed Consent Policy.
- 4) Timely referral must be made if the patient's condition warrants it, or the patient requests it, for other naturopathic treatment modalities or for another health professional's care. These referrals can be for consultation, transfer of care, or for co-treatment.