



Backgrounder

About Naturopathic Medicine

- Naturopathic Medicine is a primary general healthcare profession that involves a functional approach to medicine.
- Naturopathic Doctors treat the root causes of disease and address risk factors by using a variety of natural and conventional therapies.
- Treatment therapies Naturopathic Doctors may use include: clinical nutrition, botanical medicine, physical medicine, lifestyle counseling and acupuncture services.
- As primary healthcare generalists, Naturopathic Doctors work with their patients' inter-collaborative circles of care teams.

Regulatory Background

- Prior to the July 1, 2015 proclamation of the *Naturopathy Act, 2007*, Naturopathic Doctors in Ontario were regulated under the *Drugless Practitioners Act of 1925*
- Proclamation of the legislation brings the profession under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA); the same act that governs 25 other regulated healthcare professions in Ontario.
- Moving Naturopathic Medicine under the RHPA signals that the provincial government recognizes the safety and efficacy of the profession in addition to the extensive education, training, knowledge, and competency Naturopathic Doctors must exhibit to practice their profession.
- The RHPA protects public safety by carefully and clearly defining the safety standards to which regulated healthcare professionals must adhere.

Reducing the Burden on the Health Care system

- Naturopathic Doctors are focused on the overall health and wellbeing of their patients.
- Aligned with the Ontario government's *Action Plan for Health Care* and the *Seniors Care Strategy*, Naturopathic Doctors provides care that meets the goals of patient-centred care available to families where and when it is needed, without adding to Ontario's OHIP cost burden.
- Patients pay out-of-pocket for Naturopathic Medical Care; there is no cost to OHIP.
- In some parts of Ontario, Naturopathic Doctors are the only available healthcare professionals offering general primary healthcare.

Training and Education

- The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine is the only accredited Naturopathic Medical school in Ontario.
- Naturopathic Doctors must hold a university undergraduate degree in addition to receiving four years of formal training at an accredited school for Naturopathic Medicine.
- Naturopathic Doctors must write two licensing exams before being allowed to practice in Ontario.
- In order to remain in good standing with the College of Naturopaths of Ontario, Naturopathic Doctors are required to have 70 hours of approved continuing education courses every three years.