
CNDA Standard of Practice: General

Standards of Practice

Naturopathic doctors have a duty to provide safe, competent and ethical care in the best interest of the public.

Introduction

The *Health Professions Act* provides that a College Council may develop and adopt standards of practice for its regulated profession. This document outlines the general standards of practice for naturopathic doctors in Alberta. In addition to this general standards document, the CNDA has other specific standards of practice that naturopathic doctors must have knowledge of and adhere to. None of these documents supersede the others in importance.

Failure by a naturopathic doctor to comply with these standards constitutes unprofessional conduct, as defined in the *HPA s.1(1)(pp)(ii)*. Unprofessional conduct will result in disciplinary orders determined by the Complaints Process, pursuant to Part 4 of the *Health Professions Act*.

Definitions

Accountability: the obligation to answer for the professional, ethical and legal responsibilities of one's activities and duties.

Competence: the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide professional services, defined in the *Health Professions Act*.

Evidence informed practice: practice based on successful strategies that improve patient outcomes, are supported by CNDA standards of practice, and are derived from a combination of various types of evidence including patient perspectives, research, standards of practice, policies and expert opinion.

Restricted activities: the indicated activities performed as part of providing a health service that require specific competencies and skills to be carried out safely, as defined in the *Government Organization Act s.7.1* and the *Health Professions Act*. Restricted activities are not linked to any particular health profession and a number of regulated health professionals may perform a particular restricted activity. A complete list of restricted activities is found in the *Government Organization Act s.7.1*. Restricted activities authorized for naturopathic doctors are listed in the *Naturopaths Profession Regulation*.

Standard of Practice: an authoritative statement that describes a minimum required behaviour of every naturopathic doctor and is used to evaluate individual conduct. Naturopathic doctors should always strive to practice above the minimum standards. Performance below the minimum standard may result in disciplinary action.

Therapeutic relationship: a planned and interpersonal process occurring between the naturopathic doctor and patient that is established for the advancement of the patient's health and well-being.

A. Responsibility and Accountability

Naturopathic doctors must be responsible and accountable for their naturopathic medical practice and conduct.

Naturopathic doctors demonstrate this standard of practice by:

1. being accountable at all times for their own actions;
2. knowing and following all current CNDA Standards of Practice, CNDA policies and the **CNDA Code of Ethics**;
3. knowing and complying with the laws and regulations governing their practice, including the *Government Organization Act, Health Professions Act, Naturopaths Profession Regulation, Health Information Act, Personal Information Protection Act, Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, and other relevant legislation;
4. establishing and maintaining appropriate therapeutic relationships and professional boundaries with patients in a transparent and ethical manner, according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Professional Relationships and Boundaries**;
5. practising competently;
6. maintaining clear and adequate patient care and billing records according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Records Keeping**; and
7. dispensing and selling products safely, responsibly and ethically according to **Standard of Practice: Selling**.

B. Knowledge-Based Practice

Naturopathic doctors continually update their knowledge base and skills through the review of relevant research and ongoing continuing education, in order to provide competent, evidence-informed naturopathic medical care.

Naturopathic doctors demonstrate this standard of practice by:

1. providing care appropriate to each patient's condition that puts the welfare of the patient first;
2. appropriately identifying their role for the specific case and communicating it to the patient;

3. critically evaluating medical information to address clinical questions;
4. identifying the scope of the patient's problem by:
 - a) obtaining a complete history relevant to the needs and presentation of the specific case,
 - b) performing a relevant physical exam,
 - c) obtaining, performing, or referring for relevant tests, and
 - d) collecting biological specimens, when necessary;
5. formulating relevant assessments, diagnoses, or both where possible within the regulated scope of practice;
6. achieving and maintaining competence in the diagnostic or therapeutic procedure;
7. ensuring any proposed diagnostic or therapeutic procedure is appropriate for their patient;
8. performing any proposed diagnostic or therapeutic procedure according to all relevant **CNDA Standard of Practice**;
9. refraining from performing diagnostic or therapeutic procedures outside the naturopathic scope of practice;
10. refraining from performing diagnostic or therapeutic procedures outside of their individual competence;
11. ensuring a plan is in place to manage any critical or unexpected events including adverse events associated with performing diagnostic or therapeutic procedures, according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Emergency Readiness**.
12. appropriately referring to a regulated health profession or professional, according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Transfer and Termination of Care** and **CNDA Standard of Practice: Collaboration in Patient Care** under the following circumstances:
 - a) if a patient's life is or may be at risk, the naturopathic doctor shall immediately call emergency services,
 - b) if treatment of the patient's condition is beyond the scope of practice for the profession,
 - c) if the treatment of the patient's condition is beyond the competence level of the individual naturopathic doctor, and
 - d) if the treatment of the patient's condition requires expertise or technology that is beyond the scope of practice for the profession;
13. developing an evidence-informed treatment plan for the patient considering:
 - a) the best interests of the patient,
 - b) whether a referral is necessary and appropriate, and
 - c) the assessments, diagnoses, or both of the patient;
14. being familiar with the list of restricted activities as outlined in the *Government Organization Act s.7.1,2(1)*;

15. being familiar with the list of restricted activities as outlined in the *Naturopaths Profession Regulation*;
16. refraining from performing restricted activities that they are not competent to perform, despite any authorization given to the member to perform restricted activities;
17. ensuring a plan is in place to manage any critical or unexpected events including adverse events associated with performing a restricted activity, according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Emergency Readiness**;
18. implementing and amending treatment plans with informed consent in accordance to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Consent**;
19. monitoring each patient appropriately for the level and type of treatment; and
20. evaluating and reflecting on patient outcomes.

C. Clear Communication

Naturopathic doctors clearly and accurately communicate with their patients, the public and other naturopathic doctors and regulated health professionals.

Naturopathic doctors demonstrate this standard of practice by:

1. appropriately using titles according to the *Health Professions Act (Schedule 14)* and the *Naturopaths Profession Regulation* in communicating their role to the patient;
2. obtaining informed consent by the patient according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Consent**;
3. communicating all fees, including but not limited to, naturopathic services, laboratory services and dispensing and selling of products, according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Billing** and **Standard of Practice: Selling**;
4. communicating to the patient their assessment, diagnosis, or both, and differentiating between an assessment and a diagnosis;
5. explaining to the patient the potential benefits and adverse effects of the treatment plan;
6. communicating clear, accurate, verifiable and professionally appropriate information according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Advertising and Marketing**;
7. communicating appropriately with other naturopathic doctors and regulated health care professionals, according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Collaboration in Patient Care**; and
8. communicating to the patient appropriate transfer of care or termination of naturopathic care according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Transfer and Termination of Care**.

D. Professional Accountabilities

Naturopathic doctors fulfill their professional obligations and accountabilities.

Naturopathic doctors demonstrate this standard of practice by:

1. maintaining a current practice permit;
2. adhering to the **CNDA Continuing Competence Program Rules**;
3. practising within the naturopathic scope of practice, including authorized restricted activities, according to *Naturopaths Profession Regulation*;
4. practising within their own level of competence;
5. practising without impairment;
6. regularly assessing their practice and taking the necessary steps to improve personal competence; and
7. reporting unprofessional conduct of a naturopathic doctor or another regulated health professional to the appropriate regulatory body according to **CNDA Standard of Practice: Duty to Report**.

Related Documents

Government Organization Act

Health Professions Act

Naturopaths Profession Regulation

Health Information Act

Personal Information Protection Act

Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act

Naturopaths Profession Regulation

CNDA Code of Ethics

CNDA Continuing Competence Program Rules

CNDA Complaints Process

CNDA Standard of Practice: Acupuncture

CNDA Standard of Practice: Billing

CNDA Standard of Practice: Clean Needle Technique

CNDA Standard of Practice: Collaboration in Patient Care

CNDA Standard of Practice: Colon Hydrotherapy

CNDA Standard of Practice: Communication Regarding Vaccinations

CNDA Standard of Practice: Duty to Report

CNDA Standard of Practice: Emergency Readiness

CNDA Standard of Practice: Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

CNDA Standard of Practice: Infectious Disease Prevention and Control
CNDA Standard of Practice: Consent
CNDA Standard of Practice: Intravenous Chelation Therapy
CNDA Standard of Practice: Intravenous Therapy
CNDA Standard of Practice: Manipulation
CNDA Standard of Practice: Minor Surgery
CNDA Standard of Practice: Naturopathic Injection Therapies
CNDA Standard of Practice: Professional Relationships and Boundaries
CNDA Standard of Practice: Prolotherapy and Platelet-Rich Plasma Therapy
CNDA Standard of Practice: Ozone Therapy
CNDA Standard of Practice: Records Keeping
CNDA Standard of Practice: Selling
CNDA Standard of Practice: Telemedicine
CNDA Standard of Practice: Transfer and Termination of Care
CNDA Guideline: Collaboration in Patient Care in a Shared Healthcare Setting