



Naturopaths &
Medical Herbalists
of New Zealand (Inc)

Position Statement on Regulation of Naturopathy

Background

Consumers increasingly use naturopathy to enhance well-being, for treatment of everyday health complaints, management of life stages, pregnancy (1, 2) and serious chronic conditions (3-6). Naturopaths work as primary contact practitioners and complementary to conventional medicine (7). Naturopathic services are aimed at supporting the human constitution for disease prevention, health promotion, recovery, rehabilitation and palliative care (8).

Exponential global growth in use and consumer expenditure has occurred over the past 25 years (9, 10) with naturopathic consultations rivalling acupuncture and osteopathy in several world regions (11, 12). The World Health Organisation (WHO) has called for nation-states to develop regulation to assist managed integration of traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) practitioners, practices and products into health care systems (13).

Naturopaths and Medical Herbalists of New Zealand (Inc.) (NMHNZ) supports the aims of WHO. NMHNZ supports increasing standards of education, accountability of our members and professional regulation of naturopaths. NMHNZ is the only NZ naturopathic professional organisation recognized by the overarching global body, the 'World Naturopathic Federation Inc.' (WNF), which is actively working towards affiliation with WHO.

Definition of key statements

Professional regulation: NMHNZ supports professional regulation of naturopaths under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA 2003) in the same manner that other health professions are regulated. It is NMHNZ's intention to apply for statutory regulation following completion of the global *Health Technology Assessment* currently being undertaken by the WNF.

Standards of education: At the September 2019 Annual General Meeting, NMHNZ members voted to increase education standards from the current 3-years bachelor's degree to a 4-years bachelor's degree by the end of 2025, bringing NZ qualifications in line with Australian standards. This timeframe provides colleges sufficient time to develop their programs in alignment with the Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists (ARONAH) standards and competencies that we share, thereby increasing standards and accountability structures globally and supporting trans-Tasman transferability of qualifications.

Accountability: NMHNZ has developed a 'Scope of Practice', 'Code of Ethics' and 'Complaints Procedure' that holds members accountable for their actions and practice standards.

World Naturopathic Federation: WNF is the overarching body that represents naturopathy globally.

<http://worldnaturopathicfederation.org/>

The Mission of the WNF <http://worldnaturopathicfederation.org/mission-of-the-wnf/> is:

- Supporting the growth and diversity of naturopathy / naturopathic medicine worldwide.
- Supporting the appropriate regulation and recognition of naturopathy / naturopathic medicine.
- Promoting accreditation and the highest educational standards for our global profession.
- Encouraging naturopathic research.
- Establishing and maintaining a database of naturopathic organisations, regulation, accreditation, conferences and research activities.
- Working with world agencies (World Health Organisation, United Nations, UNESCO) and national governments and supra-national agencies in order to promote the naturopathic profession.

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