



Scope of Practice

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Purpose

This document describes the Scope of Practice for the Registered Naturopath and Registered Naturopath & Medical Herbalist. These professionals form an integral part of an individual's healthcare team, and/or inter-professional teams in healthcare, research and development, education, and other practice environments. They provide services in a variety of settings including, but not limited to, healthcare, business and industry (retail, manufacturing, marketing), community and public health, education, wellness and fitness centres, private practice, communications, and research.

Definitions

Qualified Naturopaths are trained in the use of:

- nutrition,
- dietary supplementation
- naturopathic medicines (combination medicines e.g. nutrients, herbal, homoeopathic)
- lifestyle counselling

and may also be trained in the use of:

- herbal medicines,
 - homoeopathic medicines,
 - body therapies
 - mind-body-energy practices e.g. meditation, mindfulness, Reiki.
- to promote well-being and healing.

Seven principles guide naturopathic client-centred care:

- *The healing power of nature (vis medicatrix naturae)*
- *Treat the whole person (tolle totum)*
- *Treat the cause (tolle causam)*
- *First do no harm (primum non nocere)*
- *Naturopathic doctor as teacher (docere)*
- *Health promotion and disease prevention*
- *Wellness"*

A naturopath who is also a medical herbalist has received additional training (equivalent to 70 credits of theory/practical specific herbal medicine education plus 60 credits of clinical programme where herbal medicine is applied in a clinical setting) and/or a qualification in herbal medicine and may provide individualised herbal medicine as a focus of treatment. Registered Naturopaths may use additional modalities in which they have received formal training which informs the individual's Scope of Practice.

Hereafter, 'Naturopaths' and 'Naturopaths and Medical Herbalists' are referred to as 'Naturopaths'.

Competence

"Registered" means the Naturopath is a paid-up professional member of Naturopaths & Medical Herbalists of NZ (Inc). At this stage, Naturopathy & Herbal Medicine are not regulated professions under the Health Practitioner's Competency Assurance Act (2003) (HPCAA).

Naturopaths are required to maintain registration, including 30 hours of Continuing Professional Education annually and maintain a current First Aid Certificate.

Competent naturopaths understand and practice within their Scope of Practice, use up to date knowledge, skills, judgement, and best practices; make sound decisions based on appropriate data; communicate effectively with clients, customers, and others; critically evaluate their own practice; identify the limits of their competence; and improve performance based on self-evaluation, applied practice, and feedback.

Context

Naturopathy is a distinct type of primary health care that blends age-old healing traditions with scientific advances and current research. It is guided by a unique set of principles that recognise the body's innate healing capacity, emphasises wellness and disease prevention and encourages individual responsibility to obtain optimal health.

Scope of Practice

Naturopaths are trained as primary healthcare practitioners in whole person, client-centred naturopathic medicine in ambulatory settings. The safety of the client is paramount.

Their scope of practice consists of health assessment, disease prevention, health promotion and management of acute and chronic conditions by stimulation and support of the body's natural healing mechanisms.

Standard health assessment utilised includes physical examination, naturopathic assessment, functional testing as well as routine laboratory testing.

Modalities utilised by naturopaths include nutrition, dietary intervention, lifestyle coaching, herbal medicine, hydrotherapy, homoeopathy, physical and mind-body therapies and energy techniques.

The scope of practice of the Naturopath varies according to the individual's training. It is expected that a Registered Naturopath, practising in other modalities, has a peer-recognised qualification that underpins their additional scope of practice. Continuing education is required in naturopathy and/or naturopathic and herbal medicine and related competence.

Those with a qualification in medical herbalism may manufacture, formulate, prescribe and dispense herbal medicines. The formulation of homoeopathic and/or aromatherapeutic medicines requires formal training in the appropriate modality.

Registered Naturopaths practise within the scope of practice of their profession unless permitted to practise outside that scope by registration, or in the event of an emergency, or for educational or assessment purposes.

Training and education

Training and education includes:

- knowledge of research methodology, methods and critique
- reviewing scientific information and research into natural plant/sea/animal/mineral substances and nutritional science
- medical sciences (anatomy, physiology, chemistry, biochemistry, pathophysiology, pharmacology, clinical assessment, physical examination, and laboratory evaluation).
- thorough case-taking
- clinical decision-making and the formulation of wellness or treatment plans, coaching and education, and referrals as appropriate.

Naturopaths may be engaged in other areas, including but not limited to research, product development, marketing and sales, education and public health promotion. Education and experience informs the practitioner's individualised scope of practice.

Relevant Legislation

The legislation appropriate to health care providers in New Zealand are adhered to:

- Treaty of Waitangi
- Health Practitioners Competency and Assurance Act (2003)
- Medicines Act (1981) and Medicines Amendment Act (2016)
- Privacy Act (1993)
- Public Health and Disability Act (2000)
- The Code of Health and Disability Services Consumer Rights
- Fair Trading Act (1996) and adherence to Advertising Standards Authority Codes of Practice
- Consumers Guarantee Act (1993)