

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

All active members of **Board of Natural Medicine Doctors and Practitioners (BNMDP–NA)**, **Natural Medicine Certification Council (NMCC)** agree to be bound by the following principles in their practices of Natural Medicine. For the purpose of convenience Natural Medicine Practitioner means any Registered Member of the **Board of Natural Medicine Doctors and Practitioners (BNMDP–NA)**, **Natural Medicine Certification Council (NMCC)**.

Paramount is the obligation to his/her profession by the undertaking of the Doctor of Natural Medicine Hippocratic Oath. This solemn declaration is to be sworn on the holy book of the practitioner's denomination. A sealed and original copy of this oath must be placed in the practitioner's office visible for all to see.

The interests of the patient should be paramount in all acts undertaken by the Natural Medicine Practitioner / Doctor in the exercise of his/her profession, in the promotion of Natural Medicine and in the undertaking of research.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner has specific obligations towards those who come seeking his/her assistance:

- To maintain strict confidentiality of all information confided in him/her by the patient. Information may be exchanged with colleagues and health care professionals for the purpose of restoring the health of the patient, or used for research, scientific articles and other educational purposes, but the identity of the patient must be kept confidential unless the Natural Medicine Practitioner judges it necessary to reveal such identity and the patient's consent to do so is duly obtained.
- Prominently, to display diplomas, accreditation and any other qualifications relating to the practice of natural medicine in the place of practice.
- To provide general information during the first visit as to fees and other professional services provided and to respond in full to all questions regarding any aspect of such fees and services.
- Not to misrepresent the nature of his/her professional services, namely not to extend a promise to cure. He/she must give an understanding to the patient

that all living organisms have the power to cure themselves, and that the Natural Medicine Practitioner can only provide advice, specific remedies, and medicine therapies, following an evaluation and analysis of the case, as well as advice on lifestyle changes which can facilitate this process of self-cure.

- To enter into a dialogue with the patient regarding the analysis of the state of health; to formulate and explain his / her advice, recommendation and natural medicine prescriptions as clearly, precisely and compassionately as possible to ensure that the patient fully understands.
- To keep in mind the limits of his/her capabilities and knowledge, as well as the means available to treat the patient, and to not undertake treatments for which he/she has neither sufficient training nor experience without obtaining the necessary assistance.
- To avoid criticizing in public or before a patient other Natural Medicine Practitioners, or their treatment.
- To maintain good rapport with other Natural Medicine Practitioners, and to furnish moral assistance when possible.
- To provide advice as soon as possible to a colleague when consulted on any matter relating to natural medicine.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner should seek to maintain cordial relations with other health care providers being mindful not to compromise his/her scope of practice. The Natural Medicine Practitioner should generally respect the therapeutic value of techniques practiced by other such providers, recognizing that such care may be of benefit to the patient. He/she shall recommend such care to the patient and make referrals where appropriate.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner should not require as a condition of treatment that the patient forego other treatment that he/she is undergoing or intends to undergo, but shall indicate to the patient his/her professional opinion as to the effect such other treatments may have on natural health treatment. The Natural Medicine Practitioner shall endeavor to work in cooperation with the other health care provider(s) in any given case where this is agreed to by the patient.

- Every person has the right to impartial access to natural healthcare without regard to age; race; gender; sexual orientation; cultural, national or ethnic

origin; economic or educational background; disability; or religious or political affiliation.

- The patient has the right to be interviewed and examined in surroundings that afford reasonable visual and auditory privacy. Individuals not directly involved with the patient's care shall not be present without the patient's permission, nor shall any person observe the patient through remote viewing or listening facilities or by audio or video recordings unless the patient expressly consented to such recording and to its use in natural medicine education and/or research.
- The patient has the right to participate actively in any and all decisions regarding his/her health care including the right to refuse the Natural Medicine Practitioner's recommendations, to the extent permissible by law, even after being informed of possible adverse consequences. In such cases, the practitioner may terminate the relationship with the patient upon reasonable notice in a courteous manner.
- To seek assistance when continued care is beyond the skill or capacity of the Natural Medicine Practitioner; when the Natural Medicine Practitioner's judgment or competence is impaired by untreated chemical dependency, or mental or physical incapacity; or when circumstances arise to create a conflict between the practitioner's personal and professional relationship with the patient.
- To recognize the right of the patient to seek a second opinion from a fellow Natural Health Practitioner or a member of another health care profession at any point in the treatment.
- In the event of quitting a practice, to ensure that his patients will continue to receive competent natural health care from another so qualified.
- To allow, on request by patients, access to their files and to maintain such files at least 5 years following the last visit of the patient.
- To seek to establish a relationship of mutual trust with the patient, and in particular to conduct patient interviews and evaluations in a manner which respects the values, personal beliefs and customs of the patient when this is communicated during the interview or evaluation.
- To cease treatment of a patient only for just and responsible cause, these including notably: the loss of a patient's confidence; a conflict of interest or similar situation which could call into question his/her professional

independence; an incompatibility of character between Natural Medicine Practitioner and patient. In such cases, the practitioner shall direct the patient to another Natural Medicine Practitioner.

- To make every reasonable effort to be available and accessible to ill patients requesting his / her services.
- To keep full and accurate records of all contacts with patients, including at least the following:
 - * Patient's name, address, telephone number, and date of birth.
 - * Essential details of patient's medical history.
 - * Dates and details of information given during health interviews and evaluations.
 - * Date and details of recommendations made and treatments prescribed.

When a Natural Medicine Practitioner refers or transfers a patient to another Natural Medicine Practitioner, or where the patient requests such a reference or transfer, the Natural Medicine Practitioner shall provide to the other Natural Medicine Practitioner all health information which can be of use in the patient's continued treatment. In cases of referral, the consulting Natural Medicine Practitioner shall, on the return of the patient to the initial Natural Medicine Practitioner, provide all relevant and useful information to the latter to ensure continuity of treatment of the patient.

All Natural Medicine Practitioners must ignore all interventions of a third party which could interface with the execution of his professional obligations with his / her patient, except where this is required by law.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner must be conscious at all times of the obligation of professional confidence:

- Information given by patients to the Natural Medicine Practitioner in the exercise of his/her profession constitutes information given under the protection of professional confidence. This information cannot be subsequently divulged except by written permission of the client where this is permitted by law.
- The Natural Medicine Practitioner must not reveal to another the fact that a person has sought his/her services when this is liable to cause harm to that person.

- The Natural Medicine Practitioner must avoid any and all indiscretion regarding and patient information of which he has been given the confidence.
- The Natural Medicine Practitioner must not make use of confidential patient information in a manner harmful to the patient or with the view of obtaining directly or indirectly a benefit for himself or another.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner can demand a reasonable payment for his/her services, but this must take into account what is generally charged for similar services within the profession as a whole. No payment can be demanded in advanced, the Natural Medicine Practitioner is free to offer his/her services free where his/her conscience so dictates. Collection procedure of any payment owing can only take place after duly advising the patient, and such procedures must be undertaken with tact and restraint, judicial procedures being a last resort after all other reasonable and only after notice of failure of payment has been duly given.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner must not abuse his / her position of trust by engaging in reprehensible or immoral acts with any patient, in particular all sexual contact between Natural Medicine Practitioners and patient is proscribed. Where the Natural Medicine Practitioner is aware of a conflict of interest, he / she must so advise the patient and ask him / her if they are in agreement to continue treatment.

The Natural Medicine Practitioner has a specific obligation to his colleagues regarding the exercise of his/her profession:

- To exercise his / her profession according to the highest principles and, to this end, to continually improve his / her knowledge and training.
- Registration and designations must be surrendered when registration ceases or at the request of the disciplinary committee of the Board.
- Registrant must renew registration annually on January 1st. each year to validate his/her position on the registry of BNMDP-NA.
- To avoid any acting in his/ her professional capacity in a manner susceptible to compromise the quality of service or which could undermine the reputation or the dignity of the position.