



The College of Naturopaths of Ontario

August 24, 2015

Naturopathic Doctors Gain Prescribing Authority

On July 1, 2015, the *Naturopathy Act, 2007* was proclaimed, meaning naturopathic doctors (NDs) have come under the umbrella of the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* and can now prescribe certain drugs.

NDs are now governed by the new College of Naturopaths of Ontario, and are authorized to prescribe, dispense, compound and sell a drug. NDs have a prescriber code, and ND prescriptions for eligible drugs are covered by the Ontario Drug Benefit Program.

The 23 drugs that NDs can prescribe can be found on Table 3 of the General Regulation or in the [Professional Practice](#) section of our website.

NDs are responsible for knowing what they're authorized to prescribe. For the most part, the drugs on the list are natural health products that have been restricted by the federal government. The list was developed after extensive public consultations. It includes limitations such as dosage amounts, route of administration or the form of the drug that may be used (e.g. topical or suppository but not oral form).

Like all health care professionals, NDs are not automatically authorized to perform a new controlled act – they must first demonstrate their knowledge, skill and judgment to do so. To prescribe drugs safely and competently, all naturopaths must meet the Standard of Practice for Prescribing, which includes a Prescribing and Therapeutics course and exam. The training ensures NDs understand: 1) evidence-based therapeutic prescribing; 2) interactions between pharmaceuticals and natural substances; and 3) how to appropriately prescribe and use specific substances/medications to treat a variety of common conditions.

Any pharmacist who wants to learn about the scope of NDs, including their prescribing rights, can check our website or contact practice.advisor@collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca.

We want to acknowledge the Ontario College of Pharmacists for their guidance as we developed our rules around prescribing. The practice advisors from our two colleges have also been working collaboratively, with the mutual goal of ensuring the safety of patients.

Andrew Parr, CAE
Registrar & CEO