



## **Update in Naturopathic Medicine in New Mexico**

**July 12th, 2022**

### **Basics:**

#### **A definition of Naturopathic doctors from the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians ([naturopathic.org](http://naturopathic.org)):**

"Naturopathic medicine is a distinct practice of medicine that emphasizes prevention and the self-healing process to treat each person holistically and improve outcomes while lowering health care costs. Naturopathic doctors are educated and trained in accredited naturopathic medical colleges. They diagnose, prevent and treat acute and chronic illness, restore and establish optimal health by supporting the person's inherent self-healing process. Rather than just suppressing symptoms, naturopathic doctors work to identify underlying causes of illness, and develop personalized treatment plans to address them."

#### Naturopathic doctors:

- Complete full pre-medical undergraduate degrees
- Attend 4 year+ accredited residential medical school programs
- Complete over 4000 hours of didactic and hands-on clinical training
- Complete two-year residency programs whenever possible
- Are regulated in 25 states, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, primarily as primary care providers
- Are covered by private insurance in 10 states
- Are included in Medicaid programs in Vermont, Oregon, Washington and Arizona, and now New Mexico!

#### **History in New Mexico:**

- Achieved licensure in New Mexico in 2019 with the passage of SB135 Naturopathic Doctors' Practice Act

- Fully collaborated with the New Mexico Medical Board (NMMB) and the New Mexico Medical Society in drafting and passing SB135
- Are licensed as Primary Care Providers in New Mexico
- Regulated by the NMMB with support from the Naturopathic Doctors Advisory Council (NDAC)
- NMMB unanimously passed rules and regulations for ND's in November 2019
- Began granting licenses in New Mexico Spring 2020
- Inclusion as an approved Medicaid provider type in May of 2020

### **ND Practice in New Mexico**

- Currently 21 licensed ND's in New Mexico, with a predicted 20% increase per year (prediction based on outgoing questionnaires to new graduates)
- Our ND clinicians are now practicing in a variety of settings:
  - Hospital: CHRISTUS St. Vincent, Allison Donnell, ND, DOM - currently practicing as a DOM, with opportunity to eventually add in Naturopathic Medicine
  - Community Health Center: Jemez Valley Community Wellness, Jemez Springs, Juliette Sweet, ND, MSAyu
  - Integrative Practices: Taos and Santa Fe
  - Occupational Health clinic: WorkMed, Las Cruces, Jacqui Villalobos, ND
  - Specialty Private Practices: Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Corrales, Taos, Las Cruces, Española
- First residency program for ND's established in Taos October 2020 with rotations with specialists locally and throughout the state

### **Scope of Practice and impact on Primary Care:**

- Licensed to provide full scope primary care including minor office procedures and prescriptive rights for schedule 3-5, except for opioids and benzodiazapines, alongside a full naturopathic scope
- Act as a bridge between traditional medicines and modern medicine
- Work collaboratively with Medical Doctors and other medical providers including PAs and Nurse Practitioners
- Able to manage acute and chronic disease, using tools with minimal side effects including botanical medicine, nutritional medicine, mind-body medicine, homeopathic medicine, physical medicine, lifestyle medicine, or if necessary, pharmaceutical medicine and minor surgical procedures
- Focus on prevention of chronic disease and the need for emergency medicine, therefore decreasing state healthcare costs
- Attending ND's at Taos Whole Health see about 25% Medicaid patients, and residents at Taos Whole Health see 70% Medicaid patients, about 200 patients and over 1000 medicaid visits per provider per year

**This year we intend to:**

- Continue to establish and maintain licensure and association infrastructure
- Continue to educate the public, other health professionals, insurance agencies, and legislators in the use, value, efficacy, scope, and primary care status of Naturopathic medicine in New Mexico
- Improve health outcomes throughout the state by bridging the gaps between Western and holistic medicine
- Attract more primary care ND's to New Mexico to increase access to primary care and holistic medicine

**Legislation:**

- Pursue inclusion in Rural Healthcare Tax Credit
- Inclusion in the New Mexico Health Professional Loan Repayment Program
- Add additional \$125 in licensure fees to contribute to covering costs of inclusion in rural Healthcare tax credit and NM Health Professional Loan Repayment Program
- Expand pharmacy to full primary care scope to include Schedule 2
- Simplify licensure document to align more with othe NM Licensure Laws (all substantive changes mentioned above)