



The College of Naturopaths of Ontario

Standard of Practice:

Acupuncture



Introduction

The intent of this standard is to advise Members who incorporate acupuncture into their practice, how to perform the procedure safely, ethically and competently.

Naturopathic Doctors have been given access to perform acupuncture according to the standard of practice of the profession through an exemption in Ontario Regulation 107/96: Controlled Acts (Section 8(2)) made under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA). To perform acupuncture outside the scope of Naturopathic Practice and use the title acupuncturist/acupuncture practitioner, a Member must be registered with the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists.

The *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* only supports the delegation of controlled acts authorized to the profession in the *Naturopathy Act, 2007*. Acupuncture is not authorized to the profession in the Act but is authorized through an exemption and therefore cannot be delegated.

Definitions

Acupuncture: the insertion and removal of solid needles into specific points in the body for therapeutic purposes.

1. Competency

The Member has the knowledge, skill and judgment necessary to perform acupuncture safely, ethically and competently, to be able to identify contraindications to acupuncture, and to be able to identify when acupuncture is expected to be an effective treatment.

Performance Indicators

Prior to performing acupuncture, the Member:

- fulfills all requirements for maintenance of competence for performing the procedure (e.g., continuing education, College's Quality Assurance Program)

The Member has, and is able to demonstrate, current knowledge of:

- theory, philosophy and principles of acupuncture;
- anatomy, acupuncture points, acupuncture meridians;
- assessment and diagnosis;
- treatment techniques;
- indications and contraindications;
- determination of the need for a referral; and
- emergency procedures.

2. Assessment and Treatment

The Member determines whether or not the patient's condition warrants the use of acupuncture and assesses the clinical results/outcomes of the procedure. The Member makes decisions about the performance of acupuncture considering the patient's preference and status, the Member's clinical expertise, and research evidence.

The Member ensures timely reassessment of the patient's progress and response to treatment.

Performance Indicators

The Member:

- considers the patient's specific circumstances when assessing the benefits and risks associated with acupuncture;
- assesses the patient for contraindications prior to performing acupuncture;
- performs acupuncture for therapeutic purposes when it is clinically relevant;
- performs acupuncture within the context of a naturopath-patient relationship.

3. Delegation

The Member does not delegate the whole, or any part of the, controlled act.

Performance Indicators

The Member:

- performs acupuncture on his/her patient.

Related Standards & Guidelines

Consent
Delegation
Emergency Preparedness
Infection Control
Record Keeping

Legislative Framework

[Professional Misconduct Regulation](#)

Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991

Routine Practices and Additional Precautions in all Health Care Settings (2011)

Guideline C-4: The Management of Biomedical Waste in Ontario (2009)

Approval

Original Approval Date: October 15, 2012

Latest Amendment Date: December 6, 2017

Disclaimer

In the event of any inconsistency between this standard and any legislation that governs the practice of Naturopathic Doctors, the legislation shall govern.