



The College of Naturopaths of Ontario

Standard of Practice:

Communicating a Diagnosis



Introduction

The intent of this standard is to advise Members of the requirements to communicate a diagnosis to patients safely, ethically and competently.

Communicating a diagnosis is a controlled act under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, CHAPTER 18, s. 27*.

Members are authorized to communicate a naturopathic diagnosis under the *Naturopathy Act, 2007, S.O. 2007, CHAPTER 10, Sched. P, s. 4.1*.

The scope of practice of Naturopathic Medicine as outlined in section 3 of the *Naturopathy Act 2007* includes “diagnosis” as follows: “The practice of naturopathy is the assessment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions and the naturopathic diagnosis and treatment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions using naturopathic techniques to promote, maintain or restore health.”

1. Competency

The Member has the knowledge, skill and judgment necessary to communicate a diagnosis of a disease, disorder or dysfunction safely, ethically and competently.

Performance Indicators

Prior to communicating a diagnosis, the Member:

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

Before communicating a diagnosis, the Member:

- formulates a diagnosis based on a clinical assessment including one or more of the following:
 - the patient’s health history,
 - objective evaluation, including a physical examination, or
 - relevant diagnostic testing or investigations;
- considers the differential diagnoses.

2. Communicating a Diagnosis

The Member communicates a diagnosis to a patient or patient’s authorized representative.

Performance Indicators

When communicating a diagnosis, the Member:

- performs the act within the context of the naturopath–patient relationship;
- reviews with the patient the diagnosis and the clinical rationale used to arrive at the diagnosis;
- reviews the potential impact of the diagnosis on the patient;
- ensures the patient's full understanding of the diagnosis;
- reviews the treatment options available;
- responds to any questions;
- allows the patient the opportunity to seek a second opinion and provides any necessary information to facilitate a referral.

3. Delegation of Communicating a Diagnosis

A Member does not delegate to any other individual or health care professional the act of Communicating a Diagnosis.

Performance Indicators

The Member fulfills the responsibility of communicating a diagnosis to a patient.

Related Standards & Guidelines

Consent
Delegation
Record Keeping
Therapeutic Relationships and Professional Boundaries

Legislative Framework

Controlled Acts Regulation

[Naturopathy Act, 2007](#)

[Professional Misconduct Regulation](#)

[Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991](#)

Approval

Original Approval Date: October 15, 2012

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Disclaimer

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