



College of
**COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS OF BC**

Practice Standard: Prescribing Practices – Countersigning Extra-Provincial Prescriptions

Applies to Naturopathic Physicians

The College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC was created on June 28, 2024 through the amalgamation of four health regulatory colleges:

- College of Chiropractors of BC
- College of Massage Therapists of BC
- College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC
- College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC

All current requirements for standards of clinical and ethical practice issued by the four colleges remain in place upon amalgamation.

This document was created by the College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC and will be updated to reflect the amalgamation.

Practice Standard

Prescribing Practices: Countersigning Extra-Provincial Prescriptions

Practice Standards set out requirements for specific aspects of a naturopathic doctors' practice. They link with other standards, policies, and bylaws of the College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC, and all legislation relevant to the practice of naturopathic medicine.

It is the view of the College of Naturopathic Physicians of British Columbia (the "College") that it is an abuse of a registrant's prescribing authority to issue a prescription exclusively on the basis of mailed or faxed information, an electronic questionnaire, or countersigning a prescription issued by another physician.

The provision of a prescription to a patient is the result of a clinical decision made by a registrant subsequent to a comprehensive evaluation of the patient by the registrant. A naturopathic medical evaluation should be based on a face-to-face encounter with the patient and include: taking an appropriate history, conducting a physical examination, reaching a provisional diagnosis, and deciding upon any appropriate therapy and further investigations. Patient records should clearly document that the germane elements of an evaluation have been completed.

There may be situations where the registrant knows the patient and has current knowledge of the patient's clinical status from previous encounters, or as a result of group practice, and chooses to accept a previous patient evaluation as the basis for further prescribing. However, under such circumstances, the prescribing registrant must arrive at the opinion that they can safely issue a prescription. The prescribing registrant also always retains professional responsibility for any prescriptions they have written.

A registrant who is alleged to have countersigned or otherwise facilitated an extra-provincial prescription, under the purported authority of their license issued by the College, may be the subject of a complaint and/or an investigation by the College.

Updated September 2015

Disclaimer

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