



Guideline

Requisitioning laboratory tests and interprofessional practice

From time to time, a naturopathic doctor may suggest a patient undergo laboratory or other diagnostic testing or imaging that may only be requisitioned by a medical doctor. In addition, a naturopathic doctor may wish to mention to a patient that a test or tests recommended by the naturopathic doctor could be covered by MSP benefits if requisitioned by a medical doctor.

In such cases, the naturopathic doctor should bear in mind that medical doctors, like naturopathic doctors, must apply their own clinical judgment to determine whether to requisition a test for a patient. Should a naturopathic doctor wish to request that a patient's medical doctor requisition diagnostic tests or imaging for a patient, the naturopathic doctor should ensure that they engage in good interprofessional practice. Interprofessional communication between a naturopathic doctor and medical doctor should take place directly; a patient should not be an intermediary in the dialogue between a naturopathic doctor and a medical doctor. A naturopathic doctor who wishes for their patient's medical doctor to requisition a test should:

1. Explain to the patient that both naturopathic and medical doctors must perform their own assessments and apply their own clinical judgment independently to a patient's condition before requisitioning tests. Clinical judgment may vary even between two professionals in the same healthcare profession, and variation may be greater among members of different healthcare professions. For that reason, it would be unfair to the patient and the medical doctor, and poor interprofessional practice, for a naturopathic doctor to raise an expectation in the patient's mind that the medical doctor will requisition tests recommended by a naturopathic doctor without question.
2. Obtain the patient's consent to write to the patient's medical doctor explaining their opinion as to the need for a test. The naturopathic doctor may wish to include a copy of this policy with the letter and reiterate that they understand that the medical doctor will apply their own clinical judgment to the question of whether the suggested tests are necessary, and that this has been explained to the patient.

(updated Oct 2024)