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| <b>Drug Review Process</b>   | Policy Number: QA1         |
|  | Date Effective: 2025-02-12 |
|  | Last Update: 2026-05-20    |
| <b>Applies to:</b> All College staff involved in the drug review process |                            |
| <b>Title of Policy Owner:</b> Chief Regulatory Officer                   |                            |

## Policy Statement:

The College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC's ("CCHPBC") Clinical Practice Standard: Naturopathic Medicine Prescribing, Compounding and Dispensing Drugs (the "Prescribing Standard") outlines the parameters within which naturopathic physicians are authorized to prescribe, dispense, and compound drugs. The Prescribing Standard also specifies the categories of drugs excluded from prescribing by naturopathic physicians as determined by the College.

This policy describes the process to review newly approved drugs for sale in Canada by Health Canada. This process determines whether such drugs fall within the prescribing authority of naturopathic physicians or are to be added to the exclusions list within the Prescribing Standard.

## 1. Legal and Regulatory Authority:

- *Complementary Health Professions Regulation – section 23*
- *CCHPBC's Bylaws – section 9.2*

## 2. Definitions:

None identified at this time.

## 3. Policy Rationale and Purpose:

Naturopathic physicians with prescribing authority are authorized to prescribe drugs in accordance with the *Complementary Health Professions Regulation* ("Professions Regulation") and the College's Prescribing Standard. The Prescribing Standard also includes a list of drugs that are excluded from use by naturopathic physicians, beyond



what is restricted by the Professions Regulation. This policy outlines the process for reviewing and determining drug exclusions, to ensure a thorough evaluation of all drugs for approval or exclusion.

To ensure patient safety, all drugs must undergo review and receive a recommendation for approval or exclusion by the College in accordance with this policy. The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and timely process for reviewing, classifying, and determining the approval or exclusion of drugs for use by naturopathic physicians, in alignment with the Professions Regulation and the Prescribing Standard.

## 4. Roles & Responsibilities

### **Professional Standards Advisors (“practice advisors”)**

Licensed naturopathic physicians employed by the College as practice advisors are responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing newly approved drugs from Health Canada
- Conducting initial reviews and research regarding drug classifications
- Assessing whether newly approved drugs fall within pre-established included or excluded prescribing categories and identifying drugs that require further consultation or review
- Preparing briefing notes, recommendations, and supporting documentation for consideration by the Chief Regulatory Officer, the Naturopathic Medicine Drug Review Advisory Working Group, or the Board

### **Chief Regulatory Officer (or Delegate)**

- Oversee the drug review and classification process
- Approving drugs that clearly fall within pre-established included categories or are readily identifiable biosimilars as permitted for naturopathic prescribing
- Determining whether additional review, reassessment, consultation, or Naturopathic Medicine Drug Review Advisory Working Group input is necessary
- Refer matters requiring amendments to the Prescribing Standard to the Board for approval

### **Naturopathic Medicine Drug Review Advisory Working Group (the “Advisory Working Group”)**

- Provide subject matter expertise and feedback on referred drugs;
- Review drugs that fall within pre-established excluded categories, are not easily classified, or require re-review;
- Provide recommendations regarding drug classifications;
- Review and provide feedback on standards, limits and conditions, and relevant policy related to prescribing, dispensing and compounding
- Other duties as assigned.



## Board

- Review and approve recommended amendments to the Prescribing Standard

## 5. Procedures

### Drug Review Process:

1. **Monitoring and Identification of New Drugs:** The Health Canada website will be monitored weekly by licensed naturopathic physicians with prescriptive authority who are employed as practice advisors at the College for new drug approvals. Health Canada publishes lists of newly approved drugs for sale approximately every two months.
2. **Initial Review and Research:** The practice advisors will perform an initial review and research of newly approved drugs to determine their classification and Health Canada-approved indications.
3. **Classification Process:** Drugs will be classified based on the following:
  - **Pre-established included categories:** Drugs, including biosimilars, that clearly fit into categories where all similar drugs are approved for naturopathic prescribing.
  - **Pre-established excluded categories:** Drugs that clearly fit into categories restricted by regulations or prior committee decisions.
  - **Unclear classification:** Drugs not easily identifiable will require additional consultation.
4. **Consultation (if required):** Practice advisors may retain and consult subject matter experts if classification of a new drug is unclear. Further, staff will consult with interested parties, such as the Ministry of Health, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of B.C., the College of Pharmacists of B.C., the B.C. College of Nurses and Midwives, etc., as necessary.
5. **Final Recommendations:** The practice advisors will prepare a briefing note summarizing their findings and recommendations for all drugs considered, to the Chief Regulatory Officer (“CRO”, which term includes any delegate appointed for this purpose by the CRO), or to the Advisory Working Group as applicable based on the following:
  - The CRO may approve drugs that are easily identifiable as biosimilars or that fall within pre-established included categories without needing Board approval. Board approval is only necessary if the Prescribing Standard is modified (e.g., adding a drug to the exclusion list).



- If the CRO is of the view that the drug needs further review before approval, they may request that staff revisit and reassess the recommendation and/or direct the practice advisor to seek feedback from the Advisory Working Group.
- Drugs clearly fitting within pre-established excluded categories may be reviewed by the Advisory Working Group for feedback.
- Drugs that are not easily classified will generally be presented to the Advisory Working Group for review and feedback. The Advisory Working Group's feedback and subject matter expertise may assist the practice advisor in making a recommendation to the CRO or Board, as applicable.
- If the Prescribing Standard must be amended due to a drug exclusion, a recommendation will be presented to the Board by the practice advisor.

**6. Communication and Transparency:**

- Staff will maintain frequent communication with licensees, providing updates on drug classifications.
- Licensees will have access to three categorized lists (included, excluded, and under review) via the registrant login portal. If a drug is not listed, registrants must contact the College for clarification.

## 6. Other Relevant Policies and Documents:

- [Clinical Practice Standard: Naturopathic Medicine Prescribing, Compounding and Dispensing Drugs](#)

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| Reviewed by Director, Legal Services: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | On: 2026-05-19 |
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| Approved By:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Board<br><input type="checkbox"/> Committee ( <i>Committee Name</i> )<br><input type="checkbox"/> Registrar/CEO<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department Executive Director<br>➤ Name: Kate Parisotto<br>➤ Title: Chief Regulatory Officer | Date Approved:<br>2025-02-12 |
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**Next Policy Review Date:**

2029-05-01

**Revision History:**

**Last Updated:** 2026-05-20

**Previous Update:** NA or Select date

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