

Cayford, Edna

From: Carrie Werner <cwerner.nd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2026 9:33 AM
To: Cayford, Edna
Subject: Support to the Major Substantive rules provisionally adopted by the complementary healthcare providers

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Dear Chairs Mathieson and Bailey and members of the HCIFS Committee,

My name is Dr. Carrie Werner, ND, CPM, and I am a naturopathic doctor living and practicing in District 1 in Sagadahoc County for over 10 years. I am writing in strong support of the Resolve to Review Major Substantive Rule Related to the Naturopathic Formulary as proposed by the Board of Complementary Health Care Providers.

In my daily practice, I see firsthand how the current formulary limits my ability to care for patients safely and effectively. These proposed updates are not about expanding beyond our training—they are about allowing naturopathic doctors to practice within the full scope of what we are already educated and qualified to do.

One patient in particular comes to mind. They came to me with a history of high blood pressure and had been stable for years on medication prescribed by a primary care provider they no longer had access to. When they ran out of their prescription, they came to me for help. I knew exactly what they needed. I was trained to manage this condition, and I could clearly see the risk of them going without medication. But under the current formulary, I could not provide even a short-term refill.

Instead, this patient spent weeks trying to find a new provider. During that time, their blood pressure rose to unsafe levels. They became increasingly anxious, not knowing what would happen if they couldn't get their medication in time. Ultimately, they ended up in urgent care—something that could have been entirely avoided with a simple refill in my office.

This is not an isolated incident. I see versions of this situation over and over again. Patients who are stable, who trust their care with me, and who could be safely managed in my office are instead pushed into an already overburdened healthcare system.

I also care for patients with consistently high blood pressure where the safest and most appropriate course of action would be to begin medication while also supporting them with naturopathic therapies. Under the current rules, I cannot do that. Patients are left to either go without needed treatment or navigate significant barriers to find another prescriber. I have even had other providers express frustration that I have not started a patient on medication—only for me to explain that I am not legally allowed to.

Another major gap is in the treatment of complex conditions like Lyme disease. I have had patients who could not tolerate oral antibiotics and were clear candidates for IV therapy, yet the only clinic available to

them had a waitlist of over a year. These are not rare situations—they are routine. And they all point to the same issue: the current formulary ties the hands of qualified providers and leaves patients without timely, appropriate care.

Naturopathic doctors have been licensed in Maine since 1996, and our education includes extensive training in pharmacology, diagnostics, and clinical care. We complete rigorous coursework, pass national board examinations, and in Maine, complete a supervisory year before practicing independently. We are trained to prescribe responsibly and conservatively, and our track record in this state reflects that.

The proposed rules are thoughtful, measured, and long overdue. They will:

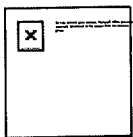
- Modernize the formulary and provide clarity for providers, pharmacists, and patients
- Allow for the appropriate use of IV therapies
- Clarify our ability to order advanced imaging when clinically necessary

At a time when Maine is facing a significant healthcare provider shortage, naturopathic doctors are ready to help fill critical gaps in care. Updating the formulary will allow us to do so more effectively, reduce unnecessary strain on the healthcare system, and most importantly, prevent situations like the one I described.

I urge you to support these rules as written.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
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