

Cayford, Edna

From: Melissa H <mimifoster.list@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 6:49 AM
To: Cayford, Edna
Subject: In Support of the Major Substantive Rules provisionally adopted by the Board of Complementary Healthcare Providers - LD2242

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Co-chairs Mathieson and Bailey and members of the committee.

I'm Melissa and I live in Hope. I've seen an ND for 19 years, and I support the new formulary rules as written.

I have so many examples I could use from my health journey over the past 30 years, but I have selected just a couple due to time constraints.

Basically - there are some patients who need different answers to get better. NDs are detectives that help people when others can't. I suffered from chronic sinusitis, migraines, arthritis and rosacea for 10 years when I met Dr. E. I'd seen the best doctors in NYC, had 2 surgeries and used all the medications they prescribed diligently. Finally, my ENT told me I had the biggest file of any patient, gave me a hug and said maybe I should leave NY because of the allergens. I found Dr. E who was so curious and had ideas immediately about what we should do to get to the bottom of things. We got to work on my inflammation and my sinus infections cleared up, so did everything else! It took a lot of detective work, but we figured it out. She also helped with my Hashimoto Thyroiditis. When I went back to my doctor feeling better than I had in years, he dismissed it - he wasn't sure about NDs - he wasn't curious about how I got better and he was not interested in working with her.

I have couple of stories to share regarding my thyroid treatment: I've been on a prescription for my thyroid for many years. My ND realized my unexplained hives was caused by a hypothyroidism and had me on a special compounded formula and some supplements that she monitored closely. I felt great.

During pregnancy I was forced to see a specialist endocrinologist and he made me switch medications and my hives returned. I pleaded with the MD to put me back on my compounded formula, which he did reluctantly - and my issues resolved and I had a healthy pregnancy. Once my daughter was born I felt great. Six months out routine labs showed a slightly low TSH and he insisted I stop medication. I fought against it stating I had been on medication for 20 yrs and that I was feeling amazing with no hypo symptoms. My ND did not recommend abruptly stopping either. He refused to write another script. Within weeks I felt horrible and then a host of terrible issues continued to pop up, and

when I almost nodded off at the wheel one morning, I begged them to do labs... which showed my TSH shot up to over 100! It took me over two years for my thyroid to recover.

Several years later, when the NP I had been seeing as my GP left the practice, the MD in charge did not want to continue the medication I'd been stable on for years. When I questioned him and explained why my naturopathic doctor thought I needed some T3, he told me he 'did not believe in naturopathic medicine', issued one prescription as a courtesy, and then fired me because my case was 'too complex'.

I hope these stories make clear that the idea that patients can simply see another provider for a prescription when they are working with a naturopathic doctor is not the reality. Forcing someone to try to cram a complicated history into a quick visit so the doctor understands the supplements and herbs you are on and the reason your ND feels you need a medication is challenging at best and for me, it led to a me losing my primary care and facing years to just get back where I started.

I know you are trying to understand if naturopathic doctors understand pharmacology. I think they do. My ND caught a drug reaction to doxycycline. My ND knew I had a genetic variation called CYP 2D6 that makes me more predisposed to this type of drug reaction and she was the one who caught it. She sent me back to the prescribing MD. He missed it and told me "doxy is hard on everyone" - meanwhile my heart was racing, I couldn't eat anything and the skin on my hands and feet were sloughing off. (If they asked what you did - you can say you discontinued it and I helped you find alternatives)

When Dr E prescribed hormone replacement therapy, she walked me through the benefits and side effects in detail. She encouraged me to have a mammogram when I was a little hesitant, before we started medication, to manage risk. And when I developed a symptom that was little concerning a few months into the medication, she immediately referred me for imaging at PenBay - it turned out to be fine, but we were glad we checked.

As someone with autoimmune issues, my health improved dramatically when I turned to naturopathic care 19 years ago. I have had several occasions when no one else could determine what was causing my severe health issues, and the one practitioner that was curious, could take the time and was able to get to the root cause was my ND. More than a couple of times in the past 15 years, I have struggled to find a PCP that would work with my ND, which caused delays in care and medication.

NDs are knowledgeable and competent -they've shown you that for the past 30 years. This formulary is not an overreach, it is still a far more limited formulary than people have been able to access for years through their ND in surrounding states like VT and NH. Let's untie the hands of naturopathic doctors so they can help more Mainers.

Thank you for listening.

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Melissa Hall