

To: Co-Chairs Bailey and Mathieson and members of the HCIFS Committee Public Hearing

From: Dr Barbara MacDonald-Rodgers, ND, LAc, MSOM

RE: Support - Major Substantive rules provisionally adopted by the complementary healthcare providers

I have been practicing naturopathic and Chinese Medicine in the midcoast area since 2010 and prior to that in Oregon for 13 years. I am the author of *The Breast Cancer Companion: A Complementary Care Manual* and have published in peer review journals. I was a professor at National College and ran the dual degree oncology clinic there. I am grateful to have a full practice with referrals from patients, peers as well as trusted colleagues in the field of medical, radiological and surgical oncology.

There are around 40 licensed NDs in Maine compared to more than 1200 in Oregon, where naturopathic physicians have broad prescribing rights. There, I had a DEA number for many years. While I rarely needed to utilize it finding significant benefit using other naturopathic tools, when it was needed for a patient who did not have an allopathic prescriber or was experiencing uncontrolled hypertension, current asthmatic symptoms, or an infection while in my office, I was confident in my orders for prescription medications.

Since practicing in Maine, hundreds of times patients have asked me to prescribe medications that I had to refuse due to the outdated formulary. Had the formulary been as the committee recommends and the Attorney General approved, these patients would not have had to experience the expense of duplicated and often delayed treatment elsewhere when I am trained to prescribe for them.

A recent patient had a complicated UTI for which I could not prescribe the necessary antibiotic. Despite using herbal medicine and homeopathy, her rare treatment resistant e Coli infection progressed. She asked me for a prescription that I couldn't write. She eventually took time off work and went to urgent care but time had passed and later she required hospitalization for urinary blockage that may have been prevented had she been treated immediately while in my office.

During the pandemic, I felt that my naturopathic and Chinese medicine tools were most often successful at impacting viral load and disease progression. Dr. Moskowitz and I served our community by offering drive through testing before that was available at hospitals. Several high risk patients who are part of a large group of patients who are averse to allopathic medicine, and do not have a medical PCP, could not get antivirals and were much sicker than necessary, missed more work and some ended up hospitalized. If I were able to prescribe antivirals as I could if I were a New Hampshire or Vermont ND, this may have been prevented.

I grew up in Waterville where my father, Dick MacDonald, was an osteopathic physician. He was president of the MOA at one time. He taught me to treat my patients to the best of my abilities with respect, honesty and integrity. In the 1960s, my father, with his brother, a fellow DO from Maryland testified in front of Congress to fight for their rights for Medicare privileges at a time when Osteopathy was not well known. His letter to Dr. Boyd Buser, who was at the time on the Maine Osteopathic Association board, demonstrates his full support of the naturopathic profession. I am currently not permitted to care for my patients to the best of my abilities with this outdated formulary.

Osteopathy used to be a distinct profession that took time for whole person healthcare. That has changed over time due to assimilation into the medical profession. We are not asking for that. Maine NDs are a proud bunch who have integrity with the tools of our profession, to first do no harm and to capture the healing power of nature. One of those tools, while needed much less often than in

Dr. Barbara MacDonald, N.D., L.Ac.

allopathy, are prescription medicines that prescribed appropriately are at times a necessary tool in the practice of naturopathy.

I am asking that the committee to please support the Major Substantive rules provisionally adopted by the complementary healthcare providers as they are currently written.

Thank you for your time and attention on behalf of the thousands of Mainers who are proud to have a licensed naturopathic doctor on their healthcare team.

MacDonald ND, LAc, PC

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October 18, 2022

Boyd Buser, DO
20 Stone Road
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cc: MOA Exec. Director, Amanda Richards
Brian Kaufman, DO MAO president
Jodie Hermann, DO MAO president-elect

Dear Boyd,

Since Pat passed away, I have more time to write you a letter that I feel strongly about. As you know, my daughter Barbara, is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor practicing in Rockport. She has a very good reputation in her community of physicians and patients as do her colleagues.


I don't know if you are in support of the new Maine Osteopathic Association's legislative agenda to limit non-physician practice rights and the use of the term "physician" by non-physician doctors? I hope, that through you, the board is considering this from both sides of the situation.

I continue to be impressed by Barbara's broad scope of knowledge in the general practice area and find that the licensed naturopathic doctor in many cases has superior expertise than the DO. I guess what I am asking the board to consider is that naturopaths in general practice are and could do more to take the rural load off DOs. By limiting legislative changes to update the ND law to be on par with other states like Vermont and Washington, we may be losing good doctors from practicing within their scope of training who would otherwise have practiced in Maine's rural communities.

I am sure my daughter will be willing to speak with you or another member of the board on this matter.

I wish you the best and thank you for your contribution to the Osteopathic care in Maine.

Sincerely,


Richard C. MacDonald, DO
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