

For Immediate Release

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Naturopathic Practitioners to Urge Congressional Support for a Medicare Pilot Project *The AANP Legislative Event to Serve as Launchpad to Demonstrate the Value of Access to Integrative Care for Seniors*

(Washington, D.C.) May 16, 2016 - The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP) will host its annual [DC Federal Legislative Initiative](#) (DC FLI), May 21-23, at the Washington Court Hotel. This year's DC FLI is relevant to the more than 55 million people on Medicare who would benefit from access to integrative health care as a high-quality, preventative, and cost-effective option. The AANP is expecting nearly 150 naturopathic doctors (NDs), students, and health care leaders from across the country to unite in advocating for a pilot project. The goal is to demonstrate the effectiveness of naturopathic health care for Medicare patients. The project would be guided by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

This is unprecedented ground for the AANP. The organization is embarking on [new initiatives](#) that will yield greater patient outcomes, affordability, and access to health care.

"This year's DC FLI is a launching pad for advancing preventative measures for Medicare patients," said Jaclyn Chasse, ND, president, AANP. "Medicare is almost entirely oriented to treating patients once they are ill - most often through costly prescription drugs, invasive surgeries, and hospitalization. A pilot study documenting the benefits of cost-effective naturopathic treatment aimed at keeping people well would be a win-win for seniors, as well as the Medicare system."

In 2014, an [independent survey conducted for AANP](#) found that 75 percent of older Americans say they prefer that their doctor first use natural therapies before prescribing drugs or surgery. But, while 55 percent of seniors would consider seeing an ND, only 23 percent are willing to do so if they have to pay the entire cost out-of-pocket.

"This discrepancy shows how Medicare needs to cover evidence-based, integrative health care focused on keeping people well," said Michael Jawer, director of government and public affairs, AANP. "The intent of the DC FLI is to emphasize to Congress the value of a pilot project that would focus on naturopathic care for seniors. The project will prove that this approach will ultimately benefit both seniors and taxpayers."

The AANP has confirmed a host of influential health care experts. A few of them include:

- [Marc Boutin](#), JD, CEO of the [National Health Council](#) (NHC), will survey developments that promise to bolster the patient voice in health care decisions and expand choice. The NHC has 100 organizational members that collectively represent more than 133 million people affected by chronic disease.

- [Wendy Weber](#), ND, PhD, MPH, Chief of Clinical Research at the [National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health at NIH](#). She will highlight the value of high-quality Federal research in identifying complementary and integrative treatments that work to keep people healthy and effectively treat various types of illness.

Media coverage is permissible from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm, Sunday, May 22. Lunch will be provided. [Media Registration](#) | [View Full Agenda](#)

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About the AANP:

The [American Association of Naturopathic Physicians](#) (AANP) is the professional association that represents licensed naturopathic physicians. The AANP strives to make naturopathic medicine available to every American, and to increase recognition of naturopathic physicians as the identified authorities on natural medicine. Learn more at www.naturopathic.org.