



Implementation of the Non-Discrimination Provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides that insurers include and reimburse licensed health care providers, including naturopathic physicians, in health insurance plans. Specifically, Section 2706 of the ACA, titled “Non-Discrimination in Health Care,” states that insurers “shall not discriminate with respect to participation under the plan or coverage against any health care provider who is acting within the scope of that provider’s license or certification under applicable State law.”

Many naturopathic physicians already participate in health insurance. Many health insurers, however, either exclude licensed NDs entirely from participating in insurance plans or do not allow NDs to participate to the full extent permitted under applicable State law. Many NDs want to participate in health insurance but are prevented from doing so.

Full implementation of Section 2706 in licensed states would benefit patients, community health, individual NDs, and the naturopathic profession as a whole. Full implementation of Section 2706 would:

- Expand access for patients who wish to receive covered healthcare from a licensed ND but would otherwise not have the means to do so.
- Increase the emphasis in our health care system on patient-centered, prevention-oriented, whole person care.
- Help alleviate the shortage of primary care professionals in states that license NDs.
- Give more NDs the opportunity to provide the services they are trained to deliver.
- Expand access to licensed NDs by increasing the number of states where NDs have the opportunity to accept insurance.
- Improve the opportunities for the hundreds of graduates each year from accredited schools of naturopathic medicine to become financially successful.
- Increase the attractiveness of naturopathic medicine as a career choice and secure the long-term health of the profession.

Position of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians

Although the ACA is a federal law, much of the implementation resides with the states, including Section 2706. The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians strongly encourages its affiliate organizations in states that license naturopathic physicians to advocate for full implementation of Section 2706, i.e., to enable licensed NDs to participate in health insurance to the maximum extent permitted by law.