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Naturopathic Profession Ratifies Practice Guidelines: Anticipated Step Forward for Licensing Naturopathic Doctors

Washington DC – August 27, 2015 – The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP) has ratified *Guidance Regarding Naturopathic Practice and Care*, a document that aims to provide the public as well as healthcare policymakers across the country with a platform for understanding the competencies of naturopathic practice.

The document was approved by AANP's House of Delegates at the association's recently-completed annual meeting in Oakland, California. The Guidance will be made available to AANP members so that it can be shared with state legislators and state licensing board officials in support of efforts to license naturopathic doctors (NDs). It will also be distributed to the nation's naturopathic medical schools so that students will be fully conversant with it.

Currently, 20 states and territories license NDs; these are among the healthiest jurisdictions in the country according to [America's Health Rankings](#), an annual report issued by the United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association, and Partnership for Prevention.

"This guidance document reflects the maturity of our profession," says Kasra Pournadeali, ND, President of the AANP. "It attests to the competence, collaborative nature, and patient-centered commitment of naturopathic physicians. It further reflects ND dedication not only to serve our patients in good faith, but also our commitment toward public health. The codification is the result of the efforts of many dedicated NDs over several years, and in particular Ryan Bradley, ND, MPH. I'm proud the AANP House of Delegates, representing our leadership across the nation, approved this landmark document."

Guidance Regarding Naturopathic Practice and Care, like similar documents developed by other professions, is offered as general guidance; practice by licensed NDs consistent with its provisions, while encouraged, is voluntary. The document is aimed at general naturopathic practice and may not be applicable in all clinical circumstances or in all jurisdictions. NDs must use their independent judgment in applying the guidance to their individual practices in accordance with the applicable laws, regulations, and ordinances where they are located.

Approximately 4,400 NDs are licensed to practice naturopathic medicine, having earned their degree from 4-year postgraduate naturopathic medical schools accredited through the US Department of Education. The approaches studied include nutritional counseling and stress reduction, botanical medicine, therapeutic manipulation, and oriental medicine. A strong emphasis is placed on disease prevention and educating patients on proactive self-care to maintain wellness. [Resolutions passed by the US Senate](#) have urged Americans to learn more about this "safe, effective, and affordable form of health care."

A copy of *Guidance Regarding Naturopathic Practice and Care* is available upon request.

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The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians (AANP) is the professional association that represents licensed naturopathic physicians. 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.