



# COLLEGE OF NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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## PHYSICIANS RELATIONS QUARTERLY UPDATE

Spring & Summer 2011

### Board Update

The CNPBC held its 2011 AGM on May 5<sup>th</sup> where a large number of registrants were in attendance. It is recommended that all registrants try to attend the AGM in order to stay up to date with College initiatives. While the College does send out regular updates and maintain its website with current policies and procedures, the AGM provides registrants with a full overview of the past year's accomplishments as well as goals and initiatives for the following year.

Dr. Lorne Swetlikoff retired as President of the CNPBC board after the AGM. He will remain on the board until his spot can be filled but has decided that its time to pass the baton after his many accomplishments throughout his nine years of service.

Dr. Swetlikoff has served as President for nine years. During that time, the College has undergone many changes. He oversaw the process of the College developing its first set of bylaws under the Health Professions Act in 2006, replacing the Rules that had existed previously.

Dr. Swetlikoff championed the concept of the College retaining a full-time Registrar to provide professional management for the College in 2007. He led the College in its discussions with government over the past several years concerning clarifying the scope of practice for naturopathic physicians and obtaining clarification of the formulary and the establishment of prescriptive authority.

Part of this process was the building of the relationship with the Ministry of Health and establishing the reputation for the College of it being what the Ministry called a "robust" regulatory body. This process was solidified during the period from 2007 through 2009, working closely with the Board, Registrar and PDR Committee, and in coordination with the BCNA's lobbying efforts. In 2009 the Government of BC announced in the Speech from the Throne that naturopathic doctors would be receiving prescriptive authority and improved access to BC laboratories. During the process that led to the authorization of revisions to the Naturopathic Physicians Regulation and the CNPBC bylaws, Lorne was an assertive advocate for naturopathic doctors having their full scope of practice finally spelled out in the Regulation.

In 2009, the revised Naturopathic Physicians Regulation was authorized by government. Despite most of the media and public attention being focused upon the granting of prescriptive authority to naturopathic physicians in BC, the first province in Canada to do so, another very historic change had occurred. The Regulation for the first time, spelled out in detail the restricted activities that naturopathic physicians could perform. Overnight, after 50 years of effort by many people, naturopathic physicians in BC clearly had the broadest scope of practice of naturopathic doctors in Canada. The implications of these changes will continue to be realized long into the future of the profession.

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Dr. Swetlikoff considered stepping down from the Presidency on a number of occasions in recent years, but he felt that he needed to see the process through as President to the actual implementation of prescriptive authority. He Chaired the Pharmacopoeia and Diagnostic Referral Committee that was required under the Regulation and in this capacity as well as the presidency, he oversaw the work accomplished to establish the formulary and the Standards, Limits and Conditions required to implement prescriptive authority. With that now accomplished, Dr. Swetlikoff has resigned from the Presidency.

The CNPBC is extremely grateful for Dr. Swetikoff's nine years of service as President of the board and his drive and determination to see initiatives through to completion.

### **Registrar's Update**

The implementation of prescriptive authority continued to be a high priority. A number of mandatory steps were completed. Working with the PDR Committee, Standards, Limits and Conditions for Laboratory and Other Diagnostic Referrals were completed. This was a necessary step in the process of government working to facilitate the removal of barriers to naturopathic physicians referral to BC lab and diagnostic facilities. We continued to maintain close liaison with BINM regarding the continued provision of the required upgrading course for prescribing. A number of clarifications were issued, particularly emphasizing the need for those wishing to use Schedule 1 or 2 substances in advanced certified practices such as chelation/IV.

The complaints process, from beginning to end, was reviewed and revised, to bring the College in line with revisions to the HPA. The environment has become increasingly focused upon legal procedure and this is a reality that all Colleges are facing. The College has invested staff resources this past year in being proactive by upgrading all of our procedures and policies regarding the complaints management/Inquiry Committee process. The next priority in this regard is completing a full review of registration procedures and making any revisions to procedure that may be required. The revisions to the Health Professions Act and creation of the Health Professions Review Board (HPRB) require the College to focus resources and attention on proactively bringing all of our procedures and policies in line with the HPA and a growing body of jurisprudence. The Registrar and Inquiry Chair attended a legal seminar that examined several precedent-setting cases in Professional Regulation. The College's inspector's have now all been trained in a course that was designed as a joint project of the CNPBC and the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses. Special recognition at the AGM went to our Inquiry Committee Chair, Richard Meyer, J.D., who finished a long period of service as a public Board member. We are very fortunate that Richard has agreed to remain as our Inquiry Committee Chair and we look forward to his continuing contributions to the College. We have dealt with some complex issues on the complaints side of the College's business this past year and Richard's presence has been extremely valuable.

I have enjoyed working closely with Committee chairs and members on projects mentioned in this report. It was great to see many registrants at the AGM and meet some of you for the first time. I also am looking forward to the College reception for candidates taking their board exams this summer. My address there and discussions with prospective registrants is always a high point of the year for me.

### **Examination Committee Update**

Dr. David Bayley will be leading his final administration of the BC Board Examinations coming up in August before he retires from the Committee. Dr. Bayley has lead the committee for the past twenty-three years and has decided that it's time to pass on the responsibility to one of the many capable registrants.

The CNPBC would like to express its appreciation and thank Dr. Bayley for his many years of service as the Chair of the Examination Committee.

The next administration of the BC Board Examinations will be held in August. The information and application procedure is available on the CNPBC website.

### **Inquiry Committee Update**

In addition to the regular meetings to hear and determine complaints, the kind support of the staff has facilitated the drafting of a comprehensive manual for the Inquiry committee process. The manual will provide guidance and precedents for the procedure to be followed once a complaint has been referred to the committee by the Registrar. This work will help to ensure that the committee continues to carry out its mandate to protect the public while ensuring it follows proper procedure to protect the rights of the registrants as well as those of the complainant. The oversight of the Health Professions Review Board has served to emphasise the importance of procedure and documentation that dramatically increases the time demands on the staff. I would like to thank each of the staff, committee members and inspectors for their dedication and hard work.

### **Patient Relations Committee Update**

The Patient Relations Committee has been busy pursuing new topics with our increased scope of practice. The committee is exploring the ethics surrounding fiduciary responsibilities of a physician in different settings such as the office versus the community. Other topics being discussed are how our profession might communicate to the public our increased scope of practice, taking some responsibility off of the doctors for patients who are requesting prescriptions not included in our scope (i.e. cannabis). Lastly, with prescribing rights come promotional materials for doctors. Is there a place for these pens and posters in the office? The committee invites your opinions on this topic. Please contact Dr. Coe at 604-514-8555.

### **Pharmacopoeia and Diagnostic Referral (PDR) Committee Update**

The College has notified registrants of the issue of using vitamins and minerals that are scheduled items but would like to reiterate this once again.

If there are still some registrants using some vitamins and minerals in their practice that are scheduled items, it is your responsibility as a registrant to know what you are and are not authorized to use. The Standards, Limits and Conditions document has been on the College website for a long time. A clarification on this issue was sent to all registrants in January of this year. Dr. Swetlikoff pointed out at

the AGM that registrants who may use scheduled vitamins, minerals or other scheduled items and who are not certified to prescribe by the College are running the risk of civil and criminal liability, in addition to any consequences from the College in the event a complaint arises and such use comes to light. Dr. Swetlikoff urged registrants to sign up for the upgrading course as soon as possible.

The College urges particularly those with certifications in advanced practices including IV/Chelation therapy and prolotherapy, who have not yet become certified in prescribing, to sign up for the next prescribing upgrading course. It is imperative that you are fully aware of all Schedule I and Schedule II items and that you do not use any of those items in your practice until you are certified to prescribe. Once you become certified, you can also have all items in the ACLS guidelines available to you in your clinic, improving safety for your patients.

The College will be pursuing creating an expert panel to review new items in relation to the formulary and it will also be looking at ways to continue to improve our ability to provide clarifying information to registrants who have questions about the Standards, Limits and Conditions for prescribing.

#### **Quality Assurance Committee Update**

The Quality Assurance Committee implemented Practice Reviews this past year and has now completed the reviews for the 2010 year. This process is intended to be a learning experience and not punitive. The CNPBC Practice Review Checklist can be found on the CNPBC website in the 'CNPBC Policies and Procedures' section. They designed an Emergency Medical Protocol Flow Chart and have reassessed the need for mandatory basic first aid drugs to be stocked in clinics.

***Enjoy the Summer Season.....Live Healthy!***

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