

Editorial: Where Do We Go from Here?



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As I write another editor's letter in my downtown Ottawa office, the quiet seems almost blissful after three weeks of noise, disruptions, and chaos brought to our city by the anti-mandate/anti-public health occupations.

Our profession certainly has not been immune to the increased polarization that accompanies any discussion of vaccine mandates, as anyone who follows social media can attest. However, increasingly, there are Canadian ND voices standing up for public health in print and online media, including within this publication. At *CANDJ*, we support these colleagues and this work; as many of our contacts in health-care leadership have pointed out to us, NDs serve as a bridge to communities who may have had poor experiences in conventional medicine and are seeking a trusted person who will listen to their concerns with compassion and a balanced viewpoint, informed by good science. Additionally, when we support the work of other front-line health-care professionals (HCPs)—doctors, nurses, pharmacists and allied health practitioners—we also become trusted members of the broader community, which benefits everyone, including (and most importantly) the patients we serve.

We recognize that this position is not shared by all our colleagues in Canada and that considerable disagreements remain on this topic, as for so many issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. At *CANDJ*, we have set up a platform to discuss contentious issues like these in a respectful and professional forum; in our commentary and letters sections, authors can make their concerns known to members on a platform that allows for nuance and balanced discussion, and that informs rather than generating further contention and divisiveness.

If we are to build resilience in our community after the pandemic is over, we need to focus on initiatives that promote cohesion and collaboration within the profession, as well as with our HCP neighbours. Like our conventional colleagues, many NDs are exhausted by this pandemic; some have had to close or downsize practices, while many new grads have struggled to find job opportunities. Some NDs, on the other hand, have been scrambling to manage a surge of new and baffling post- or long-COVID patients, and patients suffering COVID- or lockdown-related

anxiety and other mood disorders. Many of us have also lost patients, friends, or family members to COVID. There is no question that two years of this pandemic have created a collective trauma in our profession, as well as our wider communities, in Canada and worldwide.

As we begin to emerge from public health physical distancing measures across Canada, we would encourage our members to check in with their colleagues and friends in the profession, consider forming local ND support groups to alleviate isolation and burnout, or just reach out to a colleague they haven't heard from recently. We strengthen our collective immunity when we engage in these individual community-building efforts. They also strengthen our individual resilience to help navigate what is likely to be another challenging year.¹

Leading off this edition is a major announcement from World Naturopathic Federation (WNF) President Iva Lloyd on the publication of the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) report. This report is the culmination of four years of work from an international team of clinicians and researchers affiliated with the WNF. As she points out, it served two main goals, which are to clarify the status of the naturopathic professional globally and to address questions raised at the policy level by regulators, accreditors and others who seek to understand how the naturopathic profession fits into the World Health Organization's HTA guidelines.

Our case study section contains an article from Singh et al. on the use of *Withania somnifera* for vertigo associated with Ménière's disease, a condition that is often resistant to many conventional evidence-based therapies.

Finally, our research section contains a review by Aucoin et al. of knowledge mobilization strategies currently in use by the Canadian Naturopathic profession, with recommendations to bridge the divide between evidence provided by ND-led research and naturopathic clinical practice. To our knowledge, this is the first major study of its kind published in North America, and it should generate considerable discussion in Canadian naturopathic leadership about how we can bring more research-based knowledge to practicing clinicians via such methods as practice-based research networks and knowledge brokering.

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Of course, as the Canadian Naturopathic Association journal, *CANDJ* is playing a central role in bringing the work of naturopathic researchers and our senior academic clinical faculty to the membership, thereby building the evidence base for naturopathic therapeutics in North America and beyond. Our work continues with this third online edition.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

¹ Editor in chief, *CAND Journal*.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

I have read and understood the *CAND Journal's* policy on conflicts of interest and declare that we have none.

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1. Saul J. *Collective Trauma, Collective Healing: Promoting Community Resilience in the Aftermath of Disaster*. Routledge; 2022.