

# Report from the Chair

Mark Fontes, ND



## Preamble

The following report was presented by CAND Chair, Dr. Mark Fontes, ND, at the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors Annual General Meeting, June 18, 2022.

## Report from the Chair

*Dr. Mark Fontes, ND, CAND Chair*

On behalf of the CAND Board of Directors and staff, I am pleased to provide our membership with a summary of the work we did on behalf of the profession in 2021 and our plans going forward. It has been an honour to be on the CAND board for the past eight years, with the last three as Chair. I would once again like to thank all past board members of the CAND, as you have helped lay the solid foundation we are able to work on today.

Your current CAND Board of Directors consists of naturopathic doctors from across Canada—British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. At the AGM last year, we re-elected two current board members to another three-year term. There were no additions to the board. We have had some changes in CAND staff and board members in the past year.

In 2021, and as noted at last year's AGM, after 30 years working for the naturopathic profession, Heather Fleck retired. We also shared, in March of this year, that Stuart Watson resigned from his position due to ongoing health issues. We once again thank Heather and Stuart for their many years of excellent work and service to the CAND. I would also like to share that Dr. Sandra Murphy, ND, and Dr. Rigobert Kefferputz, ND, have left the CAND board to pursue other interests. We are very thankful for their hard work and dedication to the CAND and to the profession in their roles. Thank you, Dr. Murphy and Dr. Kefferputz, on behalf of the profession!

At today's meeting, we have four current board members standing for re-election and we will be electing one new Board Director to fill a vacancy. The CAND is committed to diverse representation on its Board, and I encourage those of you interested in being a part of the positive change and forward movement of the profession to consider applying to join the CAND board— or

your Provincial/Territorial association board when positions become available.

I am pleased to report that the CAND membership numbers stayed strong in 2021 with 2280 members.

The CAND also remains in a healthy financial position, as we will present at the AGM. In terms of both professional membership revenues and corporate partner revenues, we met or exceeded our 2021 budget projections while reducing our overall expenses.

2021 was in many ways a year of transition. Although significant focus and work with government continued with regard to COVID-19, we were able to revisit and work on the goals and objectives we had as a board prior to the start of the pandemic. We noted many of you returning to your clinics for in-person care and patients also requesting and wanting that type of care. Throughout 2021, the CAND Board of Directors continued to meet every six weeks and held two virtual planning sessions to continue to work on our core customer groups.

We recognize the importance to our members of consistent messaging and highlighting work the CAND is doing to improve the recognition of naturopathic medicine on a national level and with the federal government. Details of our work at the federal level are outlined in the Government Relations report and will be presented during the AGM. In addition to this important work, the focus of the past year has been on highlighting the advantages of membership in the CAND, increasing membership, providing support and input to our “Better Health, Together” campaign, and helping to improve the CAND website content.

In terms of our student membership portfolio, we continue to strategize on how we can best engage with and serve our student members. As a profession, we have a stronger voice when we have more members. This past year, our focus has been on increasing student awareness of the CAND's engagement with government and the work we do, as well as working on increasing student membership numbers at CCNM Toronto campus.

The CAND continues to support and evolve the relationships with our corporate partners. We thank all of them for their continued support of the CAND and of the profession, which ensures that we can continue to do the work that we have set out as priorities.

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Naturopathic Medicine Week (NMW) is our opportunity to spread the news about naturopathic doctors, how they help their patients, and the benefits of naturopathic medicine. NMW 2021 was a great success, with content viewed 1.1 million times by more than 250,000 Canadians who engaged with it thousands of times. The engagement rate was 4.16%, twice the industry average. The hashtag NatMedWeek2021 was the most widely used hashtag across all platforms while #BetterHealthTogether was popular among NDs and ND Associations. Amplifying the organic CAND NMW content pushed messages to over 200,000 people over 750,000 times. Early data for NMW 2022 indicates this year's awareness week has been even more successful.

2021 was an exciting year for CAND publications, as the *Vital Link* moved online and became the *CAND Journal* (CANDJ). The journal now has its own website as an online, indexed, peer-reviewed journal. With a public-facing Web page and free member access, the *CAND Journal* will serve to educate naturopathic doctors and integrative health professionals in Canada and globally on evidence-informed care and the art of naturopathic best practices.

Another one of our core customer groups is insurance companies. The CAND is recognized as the “go to” organization for information on the education and training of naturopathic doctors, regularly contacted to verify credentials and scope of practice. Feedback from various insurance companies indicates that they reference our website regularly and find both the search engine and the information on the site very helpful. Regular emails and calls to the CAND office help the insurance companies understand who is and is not a qualified ND, what comprises the scope of practice, and the regulation of the profession in the various jurisdictions. Once again, the CAND attended the annual

Canada Life and Health Insurance Association (CLHIA) conference in 2021. The conference was virtual, and the CAND hosted an exhibit meeting room, which was well attended by delegates.

In addition to our core customer groups, we acknowledge the importance of working with all provinces and territories across Canada, as well as our colleagues in the United States and elsewhere in the world via the World Naturopathic Federation (WNF). I would like to thank all the Provincial/Territorial Associations, the Canadian School, and affiliate organizations—CNME, NABNE/NPLEX, WNF, and the AANMC—for their work on behalf of our profession in the past year. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Lastly, and most importantly, on behalf of the CAND and our Board of Directors, thank you to all of our members. It is your commitment to the CAND that allows the CAND Board of Directors and staff to work on your behalf, and advocate for the profession. The CAND Board of Directors looks forward to continuing to support you, improve awareness of naturopathic medicine, and represent the profession at the national level.

### Postscript

During the AGM, NDs Jatish Kaler, Tara Lantz, Renée Purdy, and Mitchell Zeifman were elected for another three-year term and Dr. Valerie Penton-Power, ND, was elected as a new CAND Board Director.

The full Annual Report is posted for members on the Members Portal of the CAND website [www.cand.ca](http://www.cand.ca)

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**Dr. Mark Fontes, ND**, is Chair of the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors.