



Government Relations

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As your national association, the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors (CAND) is mandated to represent the Profession with the federal government, including: its various ministries, directorates, divisions, MPs from all elected parties, senior policy advisors, and other bureaucrats. Although the CAND has been a recognized stakeholder with the federal government for a number of years now obtaining that status was challenging. It required determination and perseverance, attributes familiar to NDs.

Following concerted efforts in 2002 to win the government's attention the CAND began receiving invitations to meetings and consultations, usually a day or two late. We redoubled our efforts following which invitations began arriving shortly before events; however, regardless of the time constraints the CAND attended, ensuring the profession was represented.

Around that time, the CAND attended on the same day a breakfast event in Toronto and an evening reception in Ottawa both of which featured Health Minister Anne McLellan. Minister McLellan commented that the CAND was obviously determined to get her attention. We discussed with Ms. McLellan the contribution NDs could make in addressing the government's key health care concerns, and formed a working relationship. Anne McLellan became a supporter of both the CAND and naturopathic doctors. She opened the door to Health Canada, which led to other ministries and directorates. This coincided with the work of NDs Paul Saunders, Pat Wales, Anthony Godfrey and others on proposed regulations for natural products, and the creation of the Natural Health Products Directorate (now NNHPD) of Health Canada. Dr. Phil Waddington, ND was the NNHPD's first Director General about which the Profession can be proud.

We continue to work closely with NNHPD. We currently sit as a member of its Technical Working Group providing input and advice on the proposed Self Care Regulations to ensure naturopathic doctors have continued access to the products necessary to treat patients effectively. In addition to our work with the NNHPD we

collaborated with the Marketed Health Products Directorate on a follow-up to its 2012 survey on the knowledge and use of Health Canada's Adverse Reaction Reporting by NDs.

The CAND has established itself as a valuable stakeholder with the federal government. However, several years ago we recognized the need to augment our government relations efforts, and, therefore, engaged a specialty firm. Following an extensive search, we retained Hill+Knowlton Strategies (H+K), a top Ottawa-based government- and public-relations firm. H+K's knowledge and advice are invaluable to achieving our goals at the federal level. For example, H+K was instrumental in the CAND's having obtained the GST/HST exemption for the Profession in 2014. The process took five years and involved: the Canadian Naturopathic Coordinating Council (CNCC); an extensive review of tax law and tax implications for the Profession; surveys of provincial/territorial stakeholders; financial analyses on the cost to government; and numerous meetings with MPs, the Minister of Finance and his staff. Visit the Members Portal at CAND.ca for more information.

With H+K's guidance the CAND has continued its work engaging and educating federal decision makers on the benefits of naturopathic medicine. We have identified several champions who have agreed to help us advance our government relations objectives. In addition to participating in relevant consultations we have focused on areas that are important to the current government including health care for Veterans and First Nations. Our ask is that the services provided by NDs to Veterans and First Nations be included in the government insurance plan that provides coverage to both these groups. The CAND has garnered support for this initiative from a number of MPs and members of the Standing Committee on Health. We are exploring the potential for a government-funded research project with Veterans. Additionally, we are pushing the federal government to move forward on the Dene Nations motion requesting that NDs be added to the list of providers under the Noninsured Health Benefits Plan.

This past year we continued our engagement in a number of public consultations including Canada's Healthy Eating Strategy. We were pleased to see the recommendations of the CAND's working group reflected in the new Guide released in January 2019. In addition we participated in two roundtable meetings on Lyme disease held by the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Health Minister's Conference on the Opioid crisis. As a recognized stakeholder we also provided feedback on the government's proposed regulations for cannabis. CAND met with senior policy advisors, Health Ministry staff and the Cannabis

Directorate as we advocated for the ability of NDs to authorize cannabis for medical purposes. We also provided input with respect to the proposed regulations for edibles, topicals and concentrates expected to come into force before the fall election.

Although mandated to represent the profession at the federal level, the CAND also assists the provincial and territorial associations with their regulatory efforts. The rationale being that having the profession regulated in all provinces and territories will have a positive impact on our work federally. We are optimistic the Northwest Territories will be regulated in 2019.

Internally, and as part of the government relations portfolio, the CAND chairs the Canadian Naturopathic Coordinating Council which has representatives from all the Canadian naturopathic associations, schools and regulators in addition to Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges (AANMC), North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (NABNE/NPLEX),

Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME), World Naturopathic Federation (WNF) and Canadian Naturopathic Foundation (WNF). Externally, the CAND sits as the Canadian profession's representative with: AANMC; CNME; Naturopathic Coordinating Council (led by the American association); NABNE; and WNF. Our participation with these organizations is critical to ensuring they understand and consider the perspective of the Profession in Canada when making decisions.

The House of Commons has risen for the summer and Canadians will head to the polls for the federal election this fall. In the run-up to the election, the CAND will be preparing materials for members and working with members to engage their local candidates to discuss issues relating to health care and naturopathic medicine.

For further details about CAND's government relations efforts during the past year, view our annual report in the Members Portal at CAND.ca.

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The advertisement features a row of seven bottles of Vital Qi Essential Oils. From left to right: two roll-on bottles labeled 'Soothe' and 'Balance'; two small 10ml/35oz bottles labeled 'Bergamot' and 'Tea Tree'; and three 30ml/1oz bottles labeled 'Lavender', 'Eucalyptus', and 'Rosemary'. Each bottle has a white label with the Vital Qi logo and product details. The background is a blurred green plant.