



Update: BINM-CCNM Merger

Bob Bernhardt, PhD

On November 17, 2020 the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM) and the Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine (BINM), both private, not-for-profit institutions, announced their intention to merge. The amalgamated institution will be known as the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM). The two institutions have been actively working on this since June, and the merger enshrines a vision that many leaders of the profession have held for years.

I think the Boards of both colleges have shown strong vision in the creation of a new entity that is much stronger than either of the institutions on their own. The important legacy of the Boucher Institute of Naturopathic Medicine will be maintained by a vital Vancouver CCNM-Boucher campus. CCNM has the owned campus in Toronto, and the goal is for BINM to once again have an owned campus in the greater Vancouver area. For the future, the Boards envision the possibility of physical campuses in additional locations across Canada, with much greater access for naturopathic medical training for Canadians across the country.

I want to be very clear, this is an amalgamation, not a take over. The two institutions are joining together as partners who are each deservedly proud of what their naturopathic programs provide. Although the plan is that I will be the president of the amalgamated entity, the new Board will be populated by members from both of the current college boards. Faculty will jointly work on identifying the best approach to educating the students. Staff will be comparing the many systems we depend upon to see which ones would best serve the new organization.

What the amalgamation will create is many more opportunities for sharing resources and collaborating. Students will be able to expect broader access to on-line medical resources. Faculty will be able to consult with their colleagues at the other campus to share ideas about the best approach for their particular subject areas. New opportunities will arise in research.

As many CAND members will be aware, CCNM has been a world leader in naturopathic research for years. The college has chosen to support the research department over and above the grants received by more than a quarter of million dollars per year. The Canada Post studies have been referenced in licencing initiatives across North America. The intention is to engage BINM students and faculty in this pursuit of research, and to significantly expand the research undertaken.

Even among those who are overall supportive of this merger, I have heard expressions of concern about losing the items that are cherished at each institution. Both institutions have developed strong cultures, based on the naturopathic principles, but expressed in different ways. My commitment is to respect these cultural differences as we grow a proud pan-Canadian culture that serves to steward the values and legacy that each college holds dear. The amalgamated institution will be committed to the preservation of the traditional roots of the profession alongside the integration of the latest findings in research in naturopathic medicine. This joining together will benefit our students and enhance the profession in North America and abroad.

Students will not experience any immediate change in their programs or the costs associated with the program. We will work to develop greater commonality between the first two years of the program to provide better opportunities for students to transfer between campuses. Currently students who transfer face another year, or more, of studies.

I am not so naïve as to believe that there will not be challenges as we work through this amalgamation. However, I have been overwhelmed by the goodwill and incredible commitment to naturopathic education and research on each campus.

The institutions are both accredited by the Council on Naturopathic

Medical Education (CNME), the professional accrediting agency for naturopathic medicine programs, recognized by the US Department of Education and by all Canadian and American provincial and state naturopathic licensing bodies. CCNM will continue to grant the Doctor of Naturopathy degree, and Boucher will continue to grant the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine diploma. BINM has initiated a degree granting application and the amalgamated college will pursue that application with vigour.

In the future, as members of the profession look back at the creation of this pan-Canadian institution dedicated to education and research in naturopathic medicine, I believe they will view it as an inflection point marking the much greater acceptance and utilization of naturopathic medicine across the country, and beyond. 🍂

About the Author

Bob Bernhardt, B.Sc., M.Ed., LL.M., Ph.D., has served as president of CCNM since 2004. His broad academic background spans science, information systems, administrative law and higher education. He is vice-chair of the Board of Learning for a Sustainable Future, a charity promoting sustainability through improved education. At CCNM, he is accountable for ensuring the College delivers high-quality naturopathic medical education and clinical care, advances groundbreaking research, and advances the acceptance of naturopathic medicine.





Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors
Medical Malpractice Insurance Program

A Small Business Insurance Package that's affordable and meets your needs.

Designed for independent NDs who operate out of a number of different locations including their home office.

The Property, Crime and Commercial General Liability coverage is completely portable.

CONTACT US
We've got you covered!

T 416.366.5243
TF 1.877.427.8683
cand@partnersindemnity.com

145 Adelaide Street West, Suite 300
Toronto, Ontario M5H 4E5

 