

A New Title, A New Platform—Welcome to CANDJ



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This letter begins a new chapter for the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors (CAND) and this publication; after almost a year of behind-the-scenes work by the editors, CAND Executive staff and Chair, and SG Publishing, we are launching the new *CAND Journal* on a digital platform, with issues archived from the beginning of 2019 through to our current one.

The planning for this move has been in motion for several years. There is much more to an indexed naturopathic medical publication than simply placing articles online, and much of that has to do with editorial production standards that are crucial to creating high-quality, scholarly, independent content. Peer review, for example, is a critical factor in assuring scientific accuracy, and we have been building an international pool of reviewers with institutional, academic, and research affiliations who are able to give timely, appropriate, and helpful feedback to our authors. At the same time, clear and robust conflict-of-interest guidelines create transparency about potential bias when content or authors are sponsored by industry. This isn't to say that we don't welcome sponsorship, and certainly our publication could not function without the support of our advertisers and corporate partners, but key to our credibility with the public (as well as our members) is that we make these relationships clear so that readers can draw their own conclusions about whether these interests affect what the authors have written.

Additionally, our new comprehensive submission and review guidelines will make our standards clear to everyone. All the articles we publish will be carefully vetted for accuracy, originality, and relevance to our professional naturopathic audience. Both submission and peer review will be managed online through the Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform, streamlining the process for authors and reviewers, and creating a more transparent peer review process for everyone. Finally, we will have post-review editing through SG Publishing to ensure that articles adhere to professional style standards, including referencing.

At every step, we also reflected on what makes us *unique* as a naturopathic medical publication, especially our central role as a voice for Traditional & Complementary Medicine (T&CM), Indigenous and planetary health, and patient-centred care that embraces health equity. We made sure that with all our movement

towards transforming *Vital Link* to *CANDJ*, we didn't lose sight of the naturopathic principles and philosophy that brought us here. We are also clear in our new Aims & Scope statement for the journal that, at *CANDJ*, there will always be a place to discuss the humanistic aspects of healing, areas that may never be amenable to “gold standard” randomized controlled trials (RCTs) or the narrowly focused evidence-based models of care.

To lead off this edition, a letter from our CAND Chair, Mark Fontes, and a commentary from Ellen Conte at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM)'s Patterson Institute for Oncology Research and the Halifax Naturopathic Health Centre, discuss the importance of the work that has gone into this transition and the anticipated benefits of online indexing for knowledge translation and advancement of ND-led research, both in Canada and internationally. Next, Iva Lloyd, the current president of the World Naturopathic Federation, reports on work the Federation has done to survey how research is translated into naturopathic practice and some of the barriers that ND-led research has had in reaching wide uptake by practising clinicians. One fascinating detail this work has shown is that while there are few indexed naturopathic journals operating internationally (we will be one of the first), naturopathic research articles published in other indexed platforms mention the term “naturopathy” less than 8% of the time. This is a sobering statistic, and is one of our primary motivations in connecting our researchers and clinicians so that we can have more productive conversations about evidence-based practices (EBPs) that are appropriate to ND clinical decision-making.

Along those lines, Aucoin, Leach, and Cooley from CCNM in Toronto and Southern Cross University in Australia report on their recent cross-sectional study of EBP knowledge and use by Canadian NDs, part of a larger international EPICENTRE project on EBP uptake by Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) practitioners. Their study found that over 70% of participants based clinical decision-making on evidence from clinical research. They also found a predominantly favourable attitude towards EBP among participants, although there was also a self-recognition that many clinicians have had little exposure to how CAM research is conducted.

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Our final article for this edition is a literature review by Conte, Psihogios, and Seely on hyperthermia in cancer care. Until now, this therapy has not been well known outside of facilities dedicated to naturopathic cancer care, which is itself a very small proportion of ND practices in North America. This comprehensive review should fill a crucial knowledge gap in this area by surveying the evidence published to date on safety, efficacy, and best use.

Finally, and on a personal note, I would like to congratulate our Associate Editor, Cyndi Gilbert, on being designated Naturopathic Medical Student Association (NMSA) Faculty of the Year at their annual conference, right before the publication deadline. Since she came on board at *CANDJ* last summer, Cyndi has helped us expand our writing mentorship program to ND students and early career clinicians. This has served to enrich and expand the kinds of articles we publish and to advance the conversation in the profession on many novel areas of practice, including health equity.

We hope our members find our new web platform easy to navigate and enjoy enhanced access to our recent back issues,

including our new Editor Selections, which provides quick access to articles chosen based on their significant and potential impact on the field of naturopathic and integrative medicine.

As always, we encourage both our members and wider audience to submit to future editions and help strengthen the conversation about naturopathic best practices within the wider Canadian regulated healthcare community.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

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

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