

# New Regulated Health Professions & Interprofessional Collaboration

Under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA), nutrition assessment and the provision of nutrition advice are not a controlled acts; these services fall within the public domain and can legally be provided by anyone. Four of the five new colleges created since 2006 — Traditional Chinese Medicine, Naturopathy, Homeopathy, and Kinesiology — use nutrition for treatment and make recommendations for dietary intake. What does this mean for your dietetic practice?

## RESPECTING CLIENT CHOICES

While CDO believes that Registered Dietitians are well qualified through unique and broad training in food and nutrition, it is important to recognize that other regulated health professions also offer nutrition services. These new

professions may not exclusively provide nutrition services, but rather they provide food and nutrition advice within the context of their profession's treatment modalities and holistic care philosophies.

In Ontario, public interest in complementary and alternative therapies has increased significantly over the past decade. A Canada-wide study sponsored by the Canadian Health Food Association in 2005, found that Canadians spend \$2.5 billion annually on natural health products.<sup>1</sup> Clients have the right to choose who provides their healthcare services and RDs need to respect their clients' choices for seeking nutrition advice from other regulated and non-regulated healthcare providers.

Be open and respect other philosophies of nutrition care and treatment. If advice given to your client by another

## Five New Colleges Since 2006

COLLEGE	RESTRICTED TITLE(S)	SCOPE OF PRACTICE STATEMENT
College of Homeopaths of Ontario	Homeopath, a variation or abbreviation	The practice of homeopathy is the assessment of body system disorders and treatment using homeopathic techniques to promote, maintain or restore health.
College of Kinesiologists of Ontario	Kinesiologist, a variation or abbreviation	The practice of kinesiology is the assessment of human movement and performance and its rehabilitation and management to maintain, rehabilitate or enhance movement and performance.
College of Naturopaths of Ontario	Naturopath, Naturopathic Doctor, Doctor of Naturopathy, any variation or abbreviation (e.g., ND)	The practice of naturopathy is the assessment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions and the naturopathic diagnosis and treatment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions using naturopathic techniques to promote, maintain or restore health.
College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario	Psychotherapist or registered mental health therapist, variation or abbreviation	The practice of psychotherapy is the assessment and treatment of cognitive, emotional or behavioural disturbances by psychotherapeutic means, delivered through a therapeutic relationship based primarily on verbal or non-verbal communication.
College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario	Traditional chinese medicine practitioner or acupuncturist, a variation or abbreviation	The practice of traditional chinese medicine is the assessment of body system disorders through traditional Chinese medicine techniques and treatment using traditional Chinese medicine therapies to promote, maintain or restore health.

practitioner conflicts with your own, respect your client's wish to accept nutrition services from another regulated healthcare provider, especially if the treatment is beneficial.

## COLLABORATING WITH OTHER REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Above all, in the interest of client-centred care, Registered Dietitians should strive to work collaboratively with the other health professions caring for their clients. If you have concerns about the safety of a nutrition treatment recommended by a practitioner from another health profession, address these concerns with the practitioner and collaborate to find the best course of action for your client.

## EDUCATION

Understanding how natural therapies and natural health products affect a client's nutrition care plan is a critical component of client-centred, interprofessional care. Take time to educate yourself about how the other regulated health professions manage nutrition care. To support your learning, we have included below an overview of how Traditional Chinese Medicine and Naturopathy use nutrition for treatment. Homeopathy and Kinesiology will be covered in future *résumé* articles.

## TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a comprehensive system of healthcare, with its own diagnostic, assessment methods, unique treatment principles, philosophy and terminology. The *Traditional Chinese Medicine Act, 2006*, defines the practice of TCM as "the assessment of body system disorders through traditional Chinese medicine techniques and treatment using traditional Chinese medicine therapies to promote, maintain or restore health."<sup>2</sup> The goal of TCM is the promotion, maintenance and restoration of health.

According to TCM philosophy, the world is harmonious and holistic, where all living beings are viewed in relation to the surrounding environment. Man/woman is a part of this

holistic entity being influenced directly and indirectly by changes in climate. Health is maintained when Qi (energy) flows in an orderly and smooth fashion; any disturbance of Qi leads to symptoms of disease.

TCM practitioners use various therapies including acupuncture; herbal therapy; dietary therapy; manual therapy, such as tuina (Chinese massage); acupressure, cupping, gua sha (scraping method); and exercise (tai chi, qi gong) and meditation.

Dietary therapy, which includes the use of herbs, is integral to TCM practice. TCM dietary therapy is never used in isolation; it is always utilized in the context of the person and the environment, not simply treating a symptom. Instead, the practitioner assesses the patient's physical, mental and emotional health, lifestyle and their relations to the season and the environment when prescribing an appropriate diet to redirect and normalize the flow of Qi to the meridians and the corresponding organs of the patient.

When providing dietary therapy, a TCM practitioner recognizes the nutritional value of food, and focuses on its energy, flavour and movement in the human body. TCM classifies food according to the energy it generates into cold, hot, warm, cool and neutral categories; its flavour into pungent, sweet, sour, bitter and salty categories; and its movement into lifting, floating and sinking categories. Inappropriate intake or too much of one type of food may lead to excess or deficiency and a disturbance in the balance of yin and yang. A person must make corresponding changes to the diet to reduce health risks, prevent disease and maintain good health.

Special therapeutic diets will nourish and support the functioning and healing abilities of the body. TCM practitioners advise patients to modify their diet according to age and physical needs to enhance life-long wellness. They recommend moderate consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, according to changes in season, to better adapt to seasonable changes. For example, in springtime TCM practitioners will encourage patients to consume "Change of Season Soup", advise reduction in the intake

of sour flavours and an increase in the ingestion of sweet and pungent flavours to promote the flow of liver Qi in the body, reducing susceptibility to seasonal illnesses such as flu or pneumonia.

### TCM Training

Educational programs in Traditional Chinese Medicine are currently offered by private schools. They vary widely in length and content. The College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario will establish minimum education requirements for various classes of membership in their registration requirement.

## NATUROPATHY

Naturopathic medicine is one of the oldest regulated health professions in Ontario. In 1923, the profession became regulated under the *Ontario Medical Act*, and since 1925, naturopathic medicine has been regulated under the *Drugless Practitioners Act*. The Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy - Naturopathy is the regulatory body for naturopathic doctors in Ontario. In 2007, legislation to include naturopathic medicine under the RHPA was given Royal Assent.

According to the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, Naturopathy addresses the root causes of illness, and promotes health and healing using natural therapies; it supports the body's own healing ability using an integrated approach to health promotion, diagnosis, treatment and prevention.<sup>3</sup>

Therapies used by Naturopathic Doctors (NDs) include<sup>4</sup>:

- Botanical/Herbal Medicine
- Homeopathy
- Physical Therapy and Spinal Manipulation
- Asian Medicine & Acupuncture
- Lifestyle Counselling
- Clinical Nutrition

### Naturopathy & Clinical Nutrition

The relationship between nutrition and wellness, or between inadequate nutrition and disease, is a

cornerstone of naturopathic practice.<sup>4</sup> Naturopathic doctors understand the role of nutrients including anti-oxidants, dietary oils, fibre and probiotics in conditions such as hypertension, heart disease, immune suppression, cancer, allergies and macular degeneration and are educated to identify nutrient deficiencies and drug-nutrient interactions. Naturopathic application of clinical nutrition involves the use of diet and specific nutritional substances for the prevention and treatment of disease, the correction of dietary inadequacies and the promotion of wellness.

Naturopathic doctors regularly use clinical nutrition in practice and place a high level of importance on the relationship between diet and health. Special diets may be recommended, such as elimination/reintroduction diets to identify the effect of individual foods and the inclusion of specific foods for particular conditions. Treatments may also include nutritional supplementation such as vitamins, minerals, enzymes, oils and other nutraceuticals.<sup>4</sup>

### Naturopathy Training

The Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council's review of naturopathy confirmed that Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, located in Toronto, is the only school in Ontario that educates naturopathic doctors.<sup>4</sup> Applicants must have completed three years towards a baccalaureate science degree at a university in Canada (or the equivalent) before being eligible to apply to the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine program.

The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine program is four-years with three major areas of study including, basic medical sciences (anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, etc.), clinical disciplines (physical and clinical diagnosis, laboratory diagnosis, naturopathic assessment, etc.), and naturopathic disciplines (acupuncture and Asian medicine, herbal medicine, clinical nutrition, homeopathic medicine, etc.). Graduates of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine program take the standard *Naturopathic Physician Licensing Examination* used by all regulated jurisdictions in North America.

For more information on Naturopathic Medicine visit the following websites:

- The Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy - Naturopathy:  
[www.boardofnaturopathicmedicine.on.ca](http://www.boardofnaturopathicmedicine.on.ca)
- The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine:  
[www.ccnm.edu](http://www.ccnm.edu)
- The Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors:  
[www.cand.ca](http://www.cand.ca)

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## Need to know

While the College certainly believes that Registered Dietitians are the most qualified to provide nutrition counselling, it is important to recognize that other regulated health professions also offer nutrition services.

- Be respectful of client choices, they have a right to choose who provides their healthcare services.
- In the interests of your clients, collaborate with other regulated health professions.
- Educate yourself about how the nutrition services of other regulated health professions may affect your nutrition plan.

- 1 Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (2006). *Regulation of Health Professions in Ontario: New Directions*. Chapter 5, "Regulation of Homeopathy and Naturopathy". [http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/new\\_directions\\_april\\_2006\\_en.pdf](http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/new_directions_april_2006_en.pdf)
2. Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (2001). *Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture. Advice to the Minister of Health & Long-Term Care*. [http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/TCM\\_2001.pdf](http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/TCM_2001.pdf)
- 3 Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (2009). *About CCNM*. <http://www.ccnm.edu/>
- 4 Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (2001). *Advice to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care*. [http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/Naturopathy\\_2001.pdf](http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/Naturopathy_2001.pdf)

## Member Survey Fall 2009 Do you feel supported by the College?

As part of our commitment to internal and external accountability, and effective program management, we will be hiring an independent consultant to evaluate our efforts in supporting Ontario's Registered Dietitians to provide safe, competent and ethical practice.

All dietitians will be invited to participate in the evaluation. Keep your eyes open for further communication about this survey by email and mail.

For more information, or to express your interest in participating, contact Antiope Papageorgiou, QA & Information Coordinator.

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