NOVA SCOTIA
CHIROPRACTIC AND
NATUROPATHIC
REGULATOR

SP-ND003
Standard of Practice: Laboratory Testing
Approved: Effective date May 27, 2026
Amended:
Next Review Date: 2029

Note to Readers: ***In the event of any inconsistency between this document and the legislation that governs chiropractic and naturopathic practice in Nova Scotia, the legislation prevails.***

1. INTRODUCTION

The Nova Scotia Chiropractic and Naturopathic Regulator (NSCNR) is the regulatory authority for the practice of chiropractic and naturopathy in the Province of Nova Scotia.

This Standard of Practice establishes the minimum requirements for licensed naturopath Registrants who perform or request Laboratory Testing in a clinical setting.

This Standard establishes minimum requirements that must be met for any POC laboratory test used in practice. This Standard applies also to referrals or requests for Laboratory Testing to an external facility.

For clarity, this Standard does not apply to specimen collection, handling, or shipping for testing performed for external laboratories.

2. APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATION

This Standard of Practice shall apply to all naturopathic doctors registered and holding an active naturopath license with the NSCNR (the "**ND Registrant**" or collectively the "**ND Registrants**").

The administration and application of this Standard of Practice shall be the responsibility of the Registrar of the NSCNR. Should the NSCNR become aware of any alleged breach or noncompliance with this Standard of Practice, it may take any action it considers appropriate, including but not limited to:

a. contacting a Registrant to request the immediate remedy of any suspected breach or non-compliance;

b. filing a formal complaint under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* regarding the suspected breach or non-compliance as professional misconduct; and/or

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Standard are to uphold public interest and safety by:

a) ensuring laboratory testing is performed, referred or requested only where clinically appropriate and within scope of practice;

b) establishing minimum requirements for training, infection prevention and control, and safe specimen handling for point-of-care laboratory testing;
c) establishing minimum quality management requirements to support accurate, reliable results; and
d) clarifying documentation, follow-up, and escalation requirements for abnormal or critical results.

4. DEFINITIONS

The following terms have the following meanings when used in this Standard of Practice:

Critical Result is test result that indicates a potential for immediate or serious risk to patient health and requires urgent clinical assessment, escalation, and/or referral.

Clinically Significant Result is a test result that, while not meeting the threshold of a critical result, requires follow-up, reassessment, referral, or other action with appropriate urgency based on the patient's clinical presentation and circumstances.

External Laboratory Testing is laboratory testing performed in a private or public laboratory for a patient at the direction of the ND Registrant.

Instructions for Use (IFU) are the manufacturer-provided instructions that specify the intended use, specimen requirements, operating conditions, procedural steps, quality control requirements, limitations, and result interpretation parameters for a test or device.

Point-of-Care (POC) Laboratory Testing is laboratory testing performed at or near the patient in a clinical setting, where results are used to support timely clinical decision-making as part of a patient encounter.

Quality Control includes all procedures used to verify that a test/device and/or reagents are functioning as intended, including internal controls, external controls, calibration checks, and related verification processes described in the IFU.

Operating Procedure is a written procedure for a specific POC test/device that sets out the minimum steps and controls required to perform the test in accordance with the IFU, including quality control, documentation, and escalation requirements.

Professional Misconduct has the same meaning as set out in the *Regulated Health Professions Act* and includes failing to maintain the standards of practice.

ND Registrant means, for the purposes of this standard, a naturopathic doctor registered with the NSCNR and holding an active naturopath license.

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5. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

A. Competency

a) An individual ND Registrant who performs point-of-care (POC) laboratory testing must have the specific knowledge, skill, and judgment to:
   i. recognize and limit to testing within legislative and individual scope;
   ii. perform POC laboratory testing safely, ethically, and competently;
   iii. interpret results within the limitations of the test/device; and
   iv. identify when further testing and/or referrals may be necessary.

b) An individual ND Registrant who refers for external laboratory testing must have the specific knowledge, skill, and judgment to:
   i. recognize and limit to testing within legislative and individual scope;
   ii. determine clinical appropriateness of the test(s) requested;
   iii. interpret results within the limitations of the test/device; and
   iv. identify when further testing and/or referrals may be necessary.

c) Each ND Registrant must ensure their competence is appropriate to the complexity and risk profile of the specific test/device being used or referred.

B. General Standards: POC Testing

a) ND Registrants must ensure that POC tests are performed in a safe, effective, and ethical manner with clinical necessity.

b) ND Registrants only perform POC laboratory testing for the purpose of:
   i. assessing the patient's health status;
   ii. supporting communication of a naturopathic diagnosis/clinical impression; and/or
   iii. monitoring or evaluating the patient's response to treatment.

c) ND Registrants must:

   i. use only testing equipment/devices approved by Health Canada and use equipment for the purpose intended by the manufacturer and in accordance with manufacturer instructions;

   ii. obtain POC laboratory testing equipment, instruments, and supplies through legitimate and lawful supply chains appropriate to the product type and applicable

requirements, and must not obtain, store, or use supplies where authenticity, integrity, or storage conditions cannot be reasonably verified or not obtained from an Authorized Source;

iii. verify that equipment is calibrated and in proper working order immediately prior to use, where required by the manufacturer;

iv. maintain an accurate and up-to-date inventory of POC Laboratory testing equipment, instruments, and supplies;

v. ensure POC supplies and reagents are not expired or deteriorated and are appropriate for use, and promptly dispose of expired/deteriorated/substandard supplies;

vi. store supplies and reagents under appropriate environmental conditions;

vii. maintain a protocol for addressing adverse events and recalls related to POC equipment, instruments, or supplies;

viii. obtain informed consent prior to performing any testing;

ix. ensure appropriate infection prevention and control measures are in place;

x. adhere to instrument/test-specific quality controls and testing procedures;

xi. ensure testing is completed and analyzed within the proper timeframe;

xii. provide the patient with appropriate preparatory instructions for sample collection, where applicable (e.g., fasting, clean-catch urine);

xiii. wear appropriate personal protective equipment as indicated by the clinical context and test method; and

xiv. appropriately dispose of used test supplies and patient samples.

d) ND Registrants must create, maintain, and adhere to a written Operating Procedure for the performance of all POC tests used in practice. At minimum, the Operating Procedure must include:

i. roles and responsibilities of any health care professionals involved in the delivery of POC laboratory testing (where applicable);

ii. the purpose and limitations of the test;

iii. step-by-step instructions to complete the test and use any corresponding instruments, consistent with manufacturer instructions;

iv. reference ranges, where available/applicable;

v. critical/urgent thresholds and escalation/referral processes;

vi. the date of implementation and/or last revision; and

vii. procedures for setting up, validating (where applicable), calibrating (where applicable), and maintaining POC equipment, instruments, and supplies.

C. General Standards: External Laboratory Testing

ND Registrants who refer to external private laboratory testing must:

a) use only approved facilities and must ensure that the laboratory meets the standard of practice applicable to testing requirements;

b) ensure appropriate privacy compliant provisions are established for the sharing of patient information with external laboratories; and

c) Ensure that specimen collection, handling, or shipping for testing performed by external laboratories meets the requirements of the laboratory for accurate testing.

D. General Standards: All Laboratory Testing

a) ND Registrants are responsible for appropriate and timely communication of test results to patients. When reporting results, ND Registrants must:

i. verify that results comply with acceptability criteria (including QC requirements);

ii. interpret results and explain them to the patient within the limitations of the test/device;

iii. make a copy of results available to the patient and/or another health care professional involved in the patient's circle of care within a reasonable time, if requested;

iv. ensure appropriate follow-up on clinically significant results, including immediate communication and referral, if necessary, for critical results; and

v. refer as appropriate when a critical value or clinically significant result is identified and/or when potential options for care are outside of scope of practice or individual competency.

b) In addition to NSCNR record keeping requirements, ND Registrants must document in the patient record:

i. the test administered or referred;
ii. the clinical indication for the test administered or referred;
iii. the date of the test, if POC;
iv. the time of the test, where applicable;
v. the name and title of the individual or private laboratory carrying out the test; and
vi. the test result and interpretation.

E. Quality Assurance

The NSCNR may request submission of training records, SOPs, QC logs, maintenance logs, inventory records, test result documentation, patient records, and any other documentation required to demonstrate compliance with this Standard of Practice.

The NSCNR may conduct inspections or audits related to POC laboratory testing practice at any time, as determined by NSCNR Regulations and Bylaws.

Failure to comply with this Standard may constitute professional misconduct and may result in regulatory action, including restrictions or conditions on practice.

6. EXEMPTIONS

There are no exemptions to this standard of practice.

7. RESTRICTIONS

Point-of-care (POC) laboratory testing under this Standard does **not** authorize ND Registrants to:

a) perform POC laboratory testing without adhering to manufacturer Instructions for Use (IFU), applicable quality control requirements, and test-specific SOPs required by this Standard;

b) use expired, compromised, or improperly stored test materials, reagents, or supplies;

c) represent POC laboratory testing as equivalent to comprehensive laboratory testing where this is not clinically accurate;

d) interpret or rely on POC test results beyond the validated purpose and limitations of the test/device, including where confirmatory testing and/or referral is clinically indicated; or

e) operate or hold out as a laboratory testing service by performing analytical testing of specimens for third parties outside of patient care in the ND Registrant's practice.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Regulated Health Professions Act (2023)
Regulated Health Professions General Regulations
Regulations Respecting Chiropractic and Naturopathy
Nova Scotia Chiropractic and Naturopathic Regulator Bylaws

All additional Health Canada regulations governing drug and device approval.

8. ADDITIONAL RELEVANT STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Registrants are advised that all NSCNR Standards of Practice apply, including but not limited to, specific application of:

- Patient Record Management
- First Aid
- Emergency Readiness
- Infectious Disease Prevention and Control
- Immediate-use Compounding