

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.

The NSCNR serves and protects the public interest to advance ethical and competent chiropractic and naturopathic care in Nova Scotia.

Acupuncture is considered an entry-to-practice competency for ND Registrants.

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. 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 ND 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 Acupuncture, including dry-needling and/or Traditional Chinese-Medicine acupuncture, is performed only by authorized ND Registrants;
- b) providing clear requirements for continued competency training, authorization, and performance of acupuncture; and
- c) supporting safe, ethical, and evidence-informed care.

4. DEFINITIONS

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

Acupuncture means the insertion, manipulation, and removal of acupuncture needles into specific points on the body for therapeutic purposes. ***For the purposes of this standard of practice, acupuncture, dry needling and Chinese medicine acupuncture have the same meaning.***

Board refers to the Board of the Nova Scotia Chiropractic and Naturopathic Regulator

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

5. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

A. Authorization

- a) ND Registrants may use Acupuncture techniques that involve skin penetration or electrical stimulation, including but not limited to:
 - i. manual acupuncture;
 - ii. electroacupuncture;
 - iii. intradermal needle techniques; and
 - iv. ear acupuncture, including ear seed techniques where needle insertion is involved.
- b) The use of Acupuncture must be disclosed in the ND Registrants professional register upon registration and/or renewal licensure. If a Registrant's use status changes throughout the registration cycle, the Registrant must inform the Registrar of the NSCNR and update their profile in the Registrant portal online.

B. General Standards

ND Registrants who practise Acupuncture as part of patient care must:

- a) perform Acupuncture only within the naturopathic scope of practice and in compliance with all applicable NSCNR Standards of Practice;
- b) obtain and document informed consent in accordance with the NSCNR Standard of Practice: Informed Consent, including consent specific to Acupuncture treatment;
- c) ensure that professional liability coverage extends to acupuncture treatments;

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- d) maintain accurate, specific, and contemporaneous records of all Acupuncture treatments in accordance with the NSCNR Standard of Practice: Patient Record Management, including but not limited to:
- i. clinical assessment, indications, contraindications, and specific patient-specific risk factors for treatment;
 - ii. the type of acupuncture technique performed (e.g., manual acupuncture, electroacupuncture, intradermal needles, ear acupuncture);
 - iii. anatomical areas or sites treated;
 - iv. use of electrical stimulation or other acupuncture-related devices, where applicable;
 - v. patient response to treatment; and
 - vi. any adverse reactions, events, or post-treatment monitoring undertaken.
- e) use only single-use, sterile, disposable acupuncture needles, which must be discarded immediately after use in accordance with medical waste disposal requirements;
- f) ensure that all Acupuncture equipment and devices used are safe, sterile, and authorized for use in Canada;
- g) ensure personal competency in relevant anatomy, physiology, and safe needling techniques to minimize risk of injury;
- h) recognize, manage, and document adverse reactions or events related to Acupuncture treatment, and initiate appropriate emergency response, referral, or follow-up where required;
- i) maintain an emergency response protocol appropriate to the clinical setting and associated risk and in accordance with the NSCNR Emergency Preparedness Standard;
- j) perform Acupuncture procedures personally and must not delegate needle insertion or Acupuncture treatment; and
- k) where the ND Registrant practises in a shared, group, or multi-professional clinical setting, ensure that their Acupuncture practice complies with this Standard independently of other providers' practices or protocols, including maintaining appropriate documentation, procedures, and emergency preparedness.

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C. Quality Assurance

- a) The NSCNR may at any time request that a Registrant submit training or education records, appointment calendars, patient records, emergency protocols, and any other documentation required to demonstrate continued compliance with this Standard of Practice. Failure to do so may result in suspension or revocation of the Registrant's Reserved Practice Permit.
- b) The NSCNR may conduct inspections at any time as set out in the *Chiropractic and Naturopathy Regulations* and the Nova Scotia Chiropractic and Naturopathic Regulator Bylaws.
- c) The NSCNR may refuse to issue or may impose conditions on a license for the use of Acupuncture if the ND Registrant does not meet the requirements set out in this Standard of Practice or does not demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skill, judgment, or readiness to practise safely.

7. EXEMPTIONS

There are no exemptions to this Standard of Practice.

These modalities remain subject to all other applicable NSCNR Standards of Practice.

8. RESTRICTIONS

The use of acupuncture by ND Residents **does not permit:**

- a) performing Acupuncture for cosmetic purposes;
- b) delegation of this practice activity; or
- c) exceeding any individual ND Registrant's competence, training, or authorized scope of practice.

9. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

[Regulated Health Professions Act \(2023\)](#)

[Regulated Health Professions General Regulations](#)

Regulations Respecting Chiropractic and Naturopathy

Nova Scotia Chiropractic and Naturopathic Regulator Bylaws



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10. 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
- Emergency First Aid
- Emergency Preparedness
- Infectious Disease Prevention and Control
- Clean Needle Technique
- Informed Consent