

October 6, 2025

Honourable David Eby, Premier
Province of British Columbia

Delivered via email

Dear Premier Eby,

On behalf of the British Columbia Naturopathic Doctors (BCND), we are writing to raise a concern that speaks directly to your government's commitment to build a health system that works better for patients and for the people of this province.

On September 23, the College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC announced a twenty five percent increase to naturopathic doctor registration fees in the first year and a fifty percent increase over two years. Under the legacy College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC, the annual renewal fee was \$1,810 in 2018. When the amalgamated college was created, that rose to \$2,090, an increase of about 15 percent. The new proposal would raise fees to \$2,645 in the first stage and to \$3,200 in the second, which represents more than a 75 percent increase compared to the legacy level. While these numbers are alarming in themselves, the deeper issue is what they represent. Rising costs of this magnitude, introduced without transparency or meaningful consultation, are a symptom of a system under constant pressure and without cohesive planning. Instead of realizing efficiencies as promised through amalgamation, professionals are seeing higher costs and greater instability. At a time when they should be supported to work together for the health of British Columbians, they are left destabilized and uncertain about their future.

Naturopathic doctors collectively see thousands of patients every year across the province. They provide primary care, manage complex conditions, order and interpret laboratory and imaging tests, prescribe medications, and coordinate care for patients who often have nowhere else to go. One in three households in British Columbia choose to see a naturopathic doctor. When providers are forced to question whether they can remain in practice, patients suffer. Families lose access to care, communities lose capacity, and inequities deepen. The issue is not simply about fees. It is whether the system will be strengthened or whether decisions like these will push providers out, further straining a system already stretched to its limits.

The College has linked these fee increases to the Health Professions and Occupations Act and to the creation of the Office of the Superintendent of Health Professions and Occupations. The Act was introduced with the promise of modernization and the opportunity to improve regulation in the public interest. Yet implementation has created uncertainty instead of confidence. Consultation has been rushed, communication inconsistent, and no cost modelling has been shared with those expected to carry the burden. The efficiencies promised through amalgamation have not been realized. The absence of a clear plan has left providers and associations to conclude that their role in the future of the system is uncertain.

For many, the HPOA is beginning to feel less like modernization and more like instability. Without clear communication from government, these actions are sending a message that the future is anything but positive. Rather than building optimism and collaboration, the current approach is weakening confidence and pushing providers to the margins at the very moment when patients need them most. And, it is not only naturopathic doctors who feel this way. While our profession has experienced a particularly steep and sudden increase, other health professionals are watching closely and see this move as a harbinger of what may come for them. That perception is already creating tension across the system.

This is about more than regulatory design. It is about the stability of the health system and the care available to people in this province. We must protect patients from a system that is showing signs of collapse. To do that, we need every provider engaged, supported, and confident that government will communicate clearly, share information consistently, and allow for meaningful participation in the process of change.

There remains a real opportunity to change course. If the implementation of the HPOA is slowed and guided by transparency, consistent communication, and genuine engagement, it can fulfill its original promise. If regulatory colleges are directed to provide clear, data-driven justifications for their decisions, and if associations are included as partners rather than bystanders, modernization can strengthen the health workforce rather than destabilize it.

We urge you not to miss this chance to fix what is broken. The people of British Columbia deserve a system where health professionals are supported to deliver care, where families have confidence, they can access the services they need, and where modernization is experienced as progress, not disruption.

BCND would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can work together to ensure that regulatory change truly serves the people of British Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Lindsay", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Vanessa Lindsay
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Arndt", written in a cursive style.

Alix Arndt
CEO