



# British Columbia Naturopathic Association Conversation on Health Participant Toolkit

Prepared for: NDs and their patients

*Monday, April 2, 2007*

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for participating in the provincial government's Conversation on Health. With your help, we can advance our goals of realizing tangible improvements to our public health care system through better integration of naturopathic medicine.

This toolkit will assist you in making your voice heard in a manner you are comfortable with, and provide tips to ensure your comments achieve maximum impact.

The Conversation on Health was launched in fall 2006 and is expected to be completed in the summer 2007. Unlike other government initiatives that have examined improvements to health care, the Conversation is focused on the views and concerns of "ordinary" British Columbians rather than health care professionals and interest groups. In this initiative, the government is specifically seeking citizen's opinions on the health care system. If you want a say in how health care is managed, we need you to raise your voice in this debate and have your opinion heard by the Conversation on Health.

There are a number of avenues for you to register your opinion with the Conversation on Health. It does not have to take much time – you can participate by making a telephone call, writing a letter or email to the Conversation on Health office or making your opinion known with your MLA. Further, you may also apply to attend one of the planned regional forums happening around the province.



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The provincial government wants to hear from you, and they have tried very hard to make it easy for people to get involved. The options to register your comments include:

### *Send an email*

The Conversation on Health email address is:  
[ConversationOnHealth@victoria1.gov.bc.ca](mailto:ConversationOnHealth@victoria1.gov.bc.ca)

### *Mail a letter*

Letters can be mailed to:  
Conversation on Health  
Ministry of Health  
5-3 1515 Blanshard Street  
Victoria, BC V8W 3C8

### *Call toll-free*

The Conversation on Health toll-free line is available from 8:00 am – 8:00 pm with translation services in over 130 languages. The number is:  
1-866-884-2055

### *Make comments online*

The Conversation on Health web site has an online feedback form. To go there, click the “Electronic Written Submission” link midway through the Conversation on Health home page available at:  
[www.bcconversationonhealth.ca](http://www.bcconversationonhealth.ca)

### *Join the online discussion forum*

The Conversation on Health web site has an online discussion forum, similar to a message board, where you can make comments and read comments from other British Columbians. Click “Join the Online Discussion” on the Conversation web site available at:  
[www.bcconversationonhealth.ca](http://www.bcconversationonhealth.ca)



### *Contact your local MLA*

MLAs from the government and from the opposition are interested in hearing from you. If you are unsure how to contact your local MLA, call Josh Christensen at Hill & Knowlton who would be pleased to help you. Josh's phone number is:  
250-383-0990

### *Attend a regional forum*

The Conversation on Health is hosting a series of community forums across BC, happening virtually every week from January through July of this year. Typically, forums for professionals working in health care and patients who use the health care system are hosted on Fridays. On Saturdays, public forums for regular British Columbians are hosted. These public forums are open to 100 local citizens who are selected by lottery to attend from those who have indicated their interest by registering with the Conversation on Health.

You can register your interest to attend a forum in or near your community by calling the toll-free phone line (1-866-884-2055) or registering online through the Conversation web site ([www.bcconversationsonhealth.ca](http://www.bcconversationsonhealth.ca)). Upcoming forum dates and locations are available on the following page. The registration deadline is roughly five weeks prior to the forum, but often there is space available after the deadline passes and the government still encourages people to register their interest until one week prior.



<b>Public Forums</b>	<b>Professional Forums</b>	<b>Patient Forums</b>
CITY: North Vancouver DATE: March 31 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Lonsdale Quay Hotel 123 Carrie Cates Ct	CITY: North Vancouver DATE: March 30 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Lonsdale Quay Hotel 123 Carrie Cates Ct	CITY: North Vancouver DATE: March 30 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Lonsdale Quay Hotel 123 Carrie Cates Ct
CITY: Richmond DATE: April 14 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Delta Vancouver Airport 3500 Cessna Dr	CITY: Richmond DATE: April 13 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Delta Vancouver Airport 3500 Cessna Dr	CITY: Richmond DATE: April 13 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Delta Vancouver Airport 3500 Cessna Dr
CITY: Cranbrook DATE: April 21 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Prestige Rocky Mountain Resort & Conference Centre 209 Van Horne St. S.	CITY: Cranbrook DATE: April 20 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Prestige Rocky Mountain Resort & Conference Centre 209 Van Horne St. S.	CITY: Cranbrook DATE: April 20 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Prestige Rocky Mountain Resort & Conference Centre 209 Van Horne St. S.
CITY: Campbell River DATE: April 28 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Anchor Inn & Suites 261 Island Hwy	CITY: Campbell River DATE: April 27 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Anchor Inn & Suites 261 Island Hwy	CITY: Campbell River DATE: April 27 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Anchor Inn & Suites 261 Island Hwy
CITY: Fort St. John DATE: May 5 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Quality Inn Northern Grand Hotel 9830 100 <sup>th</sup> Ave	CITY: Fort St. John DATE: May 4 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Quality Inn Northern Grand Hotel 9830 100 <sup>th</sup> Ave	CITY: Fort St. John DATE: May 4 REGISTER BY: Closed PLACE: Quality Inn Northern Grand Hotel 9830 100 <sup>th</sup> Ave
CITY: Smithers DATE: May 12 REGISTER BY: March 30 PLACE: Hudson Bay Lodge 3251 East Hwy 16	CITY: Smithers DATE: May 11 REGISTER BY: March 29 PLACE: Hudson Bay Lodge 3251 East Hwy 16	CITY: Smithers DATE: May 11 REGISTER BY: March 29 PLACE: Hudson Bay Lodge 3251 East Hwy 16
CITY: Castlegar DATE: May 26 REGISTER BY: April 13 PLACE: Sandman Hotel 1944 Columbia Ave	CITY: Castlegar DATE: May 25 REGISTER BY: April 12 PLACE: Sandman Hotel 1944 Columbia Ave	CITY: Castlegar DATE: May 25 REGISTER BY: April 12 PLACE: Sandman Hotel 1944 Columbia Ave
CITY: Vancouver DATE: July 7 REGISTER BY: May 25 PLACE: Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown 1128 West Hastings St.	CITY: Vancouver DATE: July 6 REGISTER BY: May 24 PLACE: Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown 1128 West Hastings St.	CITY: Vancouver DATE: July 6 REGISTER BY: May 24 PLACE: Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Downtown 1128 West Hastings St.



## KEY POINTS TO DELIVER THROUGH THE CONVERSATION ON HEALTH

If you choose to participate in the Conversation on Health, we encourage you to make comments on any topic that interests you. That said, your participation can go a long way towards making the voice of naturopathic medicine louder and make our health care system better as a result. Some of the key points we are trying to convey include:

<p><b>Naturopathic medicine provides excellent health care to thousands of patients.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Naturopathic physicians play a large role in reducing the burdens on the public health care system.</li><li>• Naturopathic medicine is a science-based approach to health care, with an excellent safety and success record.</li><li>• Naturopathic physicians are the family doctor or primary health care providers for thousands of patients</li><li>• Naturopathic medicine is one of the fastest growing fields in British Columbia.</li></ul>
<p><b>The current health care system is inefficient because health professionals can't always work together seamlessly.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Naturopathic physicians are needlessly constrained from treating patients.</li><li>• Naturopathic physicians are educated &amp; trained to diagnose patients and refer them to appropriate specialists, but patients must be re-diagnosed by medical doctors to see specialists, or to have laboratory tests run in BC.</li><li>• Educated and trained naturopathic physicians cannot prescribe medicine that has been safely prescribed by naturopathic physicians elsewhere in North America.</li><li>• Naturopathic physicians cannot treat their patients once they are admitted to a hospital.</li><li>• Restricting naturopathic physicians from providing health services they are trained to do, creates needless delays and inefficiencies in BC's health care system.</li></ul>
<p><b>Approving services that naturopathic physicians can provide will result in better health care.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Naturopathic physicians are educated and trained to provide services, like prescribing rights, hospital access, referral privileges and laboratory access</li><li>• Outdated regulations and red tape are burdening health care, frustrating patients and straining all health professionals.</li><li>• Simple changes in BC would allow naturopathic physicians to provide services that can result in tangible improvements in health care delivery in BC.</li><li>• The changes necessary reflect existing practices already safely in place elsewhere in North America.</li></ul>



## FORUM STRUCTURE & PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES

People who choose to attend one of the regional forums will find an invigorating debate about the future of sustainable public health care. Forums provide an excellent vehicle to register comments with the Conversation on Health on a wide variety of topics. Whether it is a Public, Professional or Patient forum, each follows the same structure, and through knowing what to expect before you attend, you will have an edge to help your comments gain more impact.

At each professional forum, Premier Gordon Campbell, Health Minister George Abbott or Parliamentary Secretary for the Conversation on Health Mary Polak will make introductory comments at the beginning of the forum. Politicians will leave following their introduction so regrettably there isn't much opportunity for face-time to discuss issues with them.

### *Forum Introduction*

The introductory comments by politicians can be summarized as thanking people for attending, outlining cost pressures on the health system, saying change is needed and mentioning that government is open to any and all comments or suggestions. The politician in attendance then leaves the forum, which is opened to participants for a brainstorming session.

### *Brainstorming Session*

This is the most crucial part of the forum to get participants' issues on the radar. During the brainstorming session, participants talk about any and all topics on their mind. From these ideas, some are chosen as topics for discussion at smaller breakout groups.

Typically, the government facilitators will introduce some topics questions to stimulate discussion. These discussion topics can include:

- alternative medicine
- sustainability
- universality
- define concepts
- mixed health care
- fundamental changes
- surgery paid with public funds
- incentives for healthy lifestyles
- non-emergency care
- end-of-life care
- funding to health authorities
- healthy living education in schools
- nurse practitioners
- private health services
- comprehensiveness & portability

NDs and their patients attending these meetings and willing to be opinion leaders can deliver a focused message that can become a breakout group discussion



topic. While it is highly unlikely that a breakout group will be formed exclusively for naturopathic issues, participants can deliver a broader message about inefficiencies in the current health care system or about prevention/wellness, which are more likely to become breakout group topics.

### *Breakout groups*

It is during breakout groups that the most value is found. This is where participants delve into the meat of issues and where CoH officials take most of the information that will form the weekly reports. Participants can choose from breakout group topics and take part in the one most interesting to them.

Participants should choose the breakout group that will provide the most opportunity to bridge into BCNA issues. It is here that NDs and their patients, if willing to be vocal, can sway the discussion that will result in the most valuable registered comments.



## CONVERSATION ON HEALTH FEEDBACK FORM

We would be very interested to hear from you about your contribution to the Conversation on Health. Please complete the form below and fax or mail it to the contact information provided.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (circle one): ND or Patient

How did you participate? (check those that apply)

- Phone     Email     Online Forum     Online Feedback Form  
 Public Forum     Professional Forum     Patient Forum  
 Contacted MLA

What date did you participate? \_\_\_\_\_

If you attended a forum, which city was it in? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you list some topics on which you commented? (use space below)

Please mail or fax this page to the contact information below:

Hill & Knowlton  
310-737 Yates Street  
Victoria, BC V8W 1L6

Fax: 250-383-0992