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## **BC's Naturopathic Physicians Applaud Health Initiatives in Speech from the Throne**

Vancouver, BC (February 13, 2008) – The British Columbia Naturopathic Association (BCNA) expressed their support for the Campbell government's Speech from the Throne, which introduced bold new directions for health care and better use of health professionals to meet patient needs.

"Government has recognized that the shortage of health professionals continues to grow and the best way to combat that challenge is to allow naturopathic physicians and all health professionals to practice to the full extent of their training and ability," said Dr. Christoph Kind, President of the BCNA. "We look forward to working with government and with other health professions to make this goal a reality for the benefit of patients and the future of our health care system."

The Throne Speech mentioned improving the ability for naturopathic physicians to better serve patients, noting that "Naturopaths will be permitted to prescribe medicinal therapies as appropriate and restrictions on their access to medical labs for prescribed tests for patients will be removed."

According to Kind, the provincial government is acting on the public's desire for choice in health care and a more collaborative approach amongst health professionals. "We heard through the government's Conversation on Health that the public was tired of turf protection by health professionals, as well as limits on a patient's right to choose who delivers their health care," Kind said. "Health Minister George Abbott and Premier Gordon Campbell should be applauded for being receptive to the public's wishes and acting on them."

Naturopathic medicine includes the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease, as well as the promotion of overall health. Naturopathic doctors (NDs) provide health care that encompasses a wide-range of natural or "complementary" medicines to facilitate healing or to promote disease prevention. Naturopathic medicine incorporates both innovative science based diagnostics and therapies with traditional and age-proven medicine.

To obtain licensure as an ND in British Columbia, a person must have at least seven years education, including three or four years of pre-medical university study plus graduation from an accredited four-year doctorate program. Training includes the same basic sciences that medical doctors receive as well as a broad range of complementary therapies including botanical medicine, homeopathic medicine, clinical nutrition, acupuncture, physical medicine and oriental medicine.

**For more information, please contact:** Dr. Caleb Ng, BCNA Media Relations Representative, at 604-781-7206. For a list of doctors, events and contact numbers please visit [www.bcna.ca](http://www.bcna.ca)