

## State Legislature Position Paper 2019

**Overview:** Bills **HB 1630** and **SB 5752** update naturopathic scope of practice to ensure that patients receive optimal primary care services from naturopathic physicians (NDs).

- Naturopathic physicians (NDs) are helping to **address the primary care shortage** with **over 350 participating in the Medicaid** system. In some areas, NDs are the only available healthcare providers.
- This bill enables NDs to provide evidence-based, best practices for the increasing number of patients choosing naturopathic medicine.



- The bill **expands naturopathic prescriptive authority** for a limited number of controlled substances, in Schedule III – V only. It **excludes** all Schedule II drugs, such as Vicodin and oxycodone.
- Expanded prescriptive authority allows NDs to better manage care of patients already taking controlled medications and reduces the need for emergency department or additional provider visits for common primary care conditions.
- Naturopathic medical education requires a minimum of four years postgraduate study and is federally recognized and accredited. Pharmacology credits meet or exceed those required of nurse practitioners.
- The **2014 Sunrise Review** included **DOH and HCA support** for limited expansion of ND controlled substance authority - *beyond* that requested in these bills.
- The bill updates RCW 18.36A to recognize the Board of Naturopathy as the rule making authority for primary care procedures, in the same manner as other professions (MD, DO, RN.)
- The bill clarifies that NDs can **sign public health forms** such as death certificates, disability forms, guardianships and related documentation the same as other primary care providers.
- Washingtonians will benefit from this bill via **greater access to primary care services** and more effective and efficient care management from their naturopathic primary care providers.

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