



COLLEGE OF
NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIANS
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Suite 840-605 Robson Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3
www.cnpbc.bc.ca

Prescribing Practices: Countersigning Extra-Provincial Prescriptions

It is the view of the College of Naturopathic Physicians of British Columbia (the “College”) that it is an abuse of a registrant’s prescribing authority to issue a prescription exclusively on the basis of mailed or faxed information, an electronic questionnaire, or countersigning a prescription issued by another physician.

The provision of a prescription to a patient is the result of a clinical decision made by a registrant subsequent to a comprehensive evaluation of the patient by the registrant. A naturopathic medical evaluation should be based on a face-to-face encounter with the patient and include: taking an appropriate history, conducting a physical examination, reaching a provisional diagnosis, and deciding upon any appropriate therapy and further investigations. Patient records should clearly document that the germane elements of an evaluation have been completed.

There may be situations where the registrant knows the patient and has current knowledge of the patient’s clinical status from previous encounters, or as a result of group practice, and chooses to accept a previous patient evaluation as the basis for further prescribing. However, under such circumstances, the prescribing registrant must arrive at the opinion that they can safely issue a prescription. The prescribing registrant also always retains professional responsibility for any prescriptions he or she has written.

A registrant who is alleged to have countersigned or otherwise facilitated an extra-provincial prescription, under the purported authority of his or her license issued by the College, may be the subject of a complaint and/or an investigation by the College.

Updated September 2015