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NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

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# MIND | BODY | SPIRIT



**a bold  
new force**

to lead the development of primary health care through education and research in naturopathic medicine our research department is changing the future of health care in Canada research at CCNM continues to be a catalyst for change and growth in the profession

ISSUE NO. 1 — WINTER 2008



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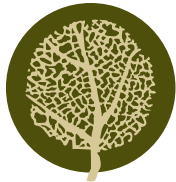
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## MIND|BODY|SPIRIT

MIND|BODY|SPIRIT is published twice a year for alumni and friends of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine.

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# contents

### on our cover

*CCNM's research team—Kieran Cooley, ND, Deborah Kennedy, ND, and Dugald Seely, ND—is changing the future of health care in Canada through groundbreaking research in naturopathic medicine.*

### 02 from the president

### 03 a new brand day

### 06 new coordinator brings knowledge of naturopathic medicine to role

### 08 less pain, more gain

### 10 vietnam initiative offers excellent externship opportunity

### 12 Integra's practice management program helps NDs solve business challenges

### 15 primary care series offers opportunity to develop case-management skills

### 17 news + announcements

*“This is truly an exciting time for CCNM  
and the profession—and for the future  
of health care in Canada and beyond.”*



## from the president

This is exciting! During the four years that I have been with CCNM one of my strong desires was to see the birth of an alumni publication that would serve to inform our alumni about the many changes and achievements occurring at the College and provide a bridge to connect graduates located across North America and around the world. This is the first issue of what will start as a semi-annual publication.

### **IN THIS ISSUE YOU WILL:**

- > learn the significance of the College's new logo, and of the bold new direction that it reflects;
- > gain insight into some of the exciting research projects we have underway with Canada Post Corporation and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers;
- > read of the new plans for continuing education and practice management; and
- > acquire a sense as to how naturopathic medicine integrates with conventional hospitals in Vietnam.

Regular features will keep you up to date on alumni, College research and activities around the profession. In future issues we plan to include feature articles on graduates who are involved in exciting, inspiring activities related to their education and profession. If you know of an ND who is involved in work that is changing the world, please let us know. (If the ND is you, we would be even more interested to hear from you.)

For those who have lost track of activities at CCNM, I think that you will be proud of the institution that is developing. A great deal of focus, effort and investment have gone into improving the academic and clinic activities and I believe they both serve as clear models for other naturopathic medical educators. Research at the College is really taking off. It seems that almost weekly we are approached by potential research partners—groups that acknowledge the pioneering work happening at CCNM. Our aim is to participate in those projects that have the potential to further the acceptance of naturopathic medicine and provide NDs with opportunities to participate in meaningful research.

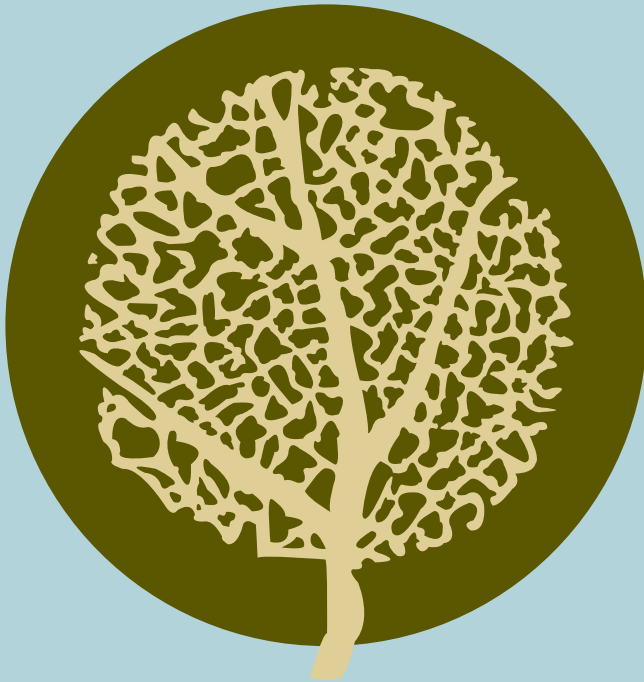
The Board of the College has established a clear vision for the institution that involves actively working as a change agent with respect to the health of individuals, the environment and our health-care system. As described in the annual report, we are actively working to build a better world. To make this difference we will be partnering with other naturopathic medical educators, researchers and providers of funds around the world. This is truly an exciting time for CCNM and the profession—and for the future of health care in Canada and beyond.

I am delighted to be writing this message for CCNM's inaugural alumni magazine. We hope that this becomes a highly valued publication for graduates of the College. Let us know how this publication can best enhance your connection with other graduates and the profession. We welcome your feedback.

Yours in health,

Bob Bernhardt, B.Sc., M.Ed., LLM, PhD (cand.)

President and CEO



*At CCNM, we're changing the way we see ourselves. Now our new visual identity symbols mean that everyone else will see us differently, too.*

## a new brand day

Anyone who's ever tried to hammer a nail, cut down a tree or even boil a pot of water can speak to the virtue of knowing and using the right tool for the job. But when that job is engaging the hearts and minds of Canadians about the role that naturopathic medicine needs to play in both our organized health-care system and in individual health management, finding and wielding the right tools is only the beginning.

*we want to change the future*

our vision: to lead the development of primary health care through education and research in naturopathic medicine.

In less than a generation, Canadians have begun to view naturopathic medicine with new eyes, and the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM) has had a pivotal role in making that happen. Now, in 2008, we're taking it to the next level. We're determined to be a bold new force in Canadian health care.

The evolution that's been taking place in the field has led us to reconsider the College's role. It's brought us to reaffirm our vision: to lead the development of primary health care through education and research in naturopathic medicine. And, encouraged by the growth in acceptance and the positive perceptions we've seen develop on the part of the public, we've set a new, ambitious – yet we believe, doable – goal for ourselves: to change the future of health care in Canada.

When the College decided to make this goal a reality, we knew we'd have to capture the imagination of many different people, government bodies and organizations. We wanted Canada to see us in a whole new light, and we knew we'd need new tools to help us do that. So, earlier this year, we sought a new image for the College, one that would capture our vision and our commitment to health care; one that matched the way we see ourselves and want others to see us.

"We wanted a fresh approach," says CCNM President Bob Bernhardt. "We realize that the College is about change, and we have to convey to others that we aim to make a difference."

We began by enlisting the help of experts, calling on KCI Ketchum and MARC Canada to help us reinvent our visual identity. Together we reached out to staff, faculty and students to lend us their ideas, and they helped us brainstorm to define the characteristics that we wanted our new identity to encompass and express. From there, we began to search for the right symbols, graphics, colours and logo – the elements that would define the College in all our written and visual communications.

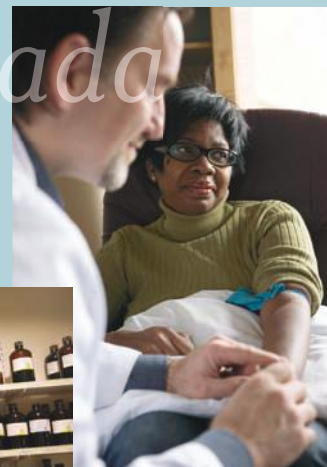
"We wanted identifiers that would instantly convey the principles that the College, its staff, faculty, alumni, students and donors stand for," says Catherine Kenwell, director, marketing and communications. "We wanted to both reflect the changes we've seen in the growth of the field and to help drive these new and evolving attitudes about naturopathic medicine – to capture and constantly remind ourselves and everyone else of the promise we, as an organization, make to our patients, our students, the public, and ourselves."

The College's new logo and colour palette were selected because they captured the essence of both what we are, and what we have the potential to become. The subtle colours are shades that are seen in nature, and the symbol – whether you see it as a tree, a microscopic view of blood vessels, a leaf or even brain cells – reflects the College's multi-faceted vision of health care and its dedication to education and research. It's a symbol that captures the imagination, and one that will go on to fuel public engagement, interest and confidence in what we do.

"I believe that we are at the start of a renaissance in Canada's approach to health care, with a much greater focus on wellness," says Bernhardt. "Health is obviously more of a concern for an aging population. The good news is that aging baby boomers realize that it is not enough to be disease free – they want to be healthy."

According to Bernhardt, the state of our existing health care system is also helping to spark the movement to embrace naturopathic medicine. "There seems to be general consensus that, if it's not exactly broken, it is breaking," he says. "People are having difficulty finding doctors. And when they do, they often get the government-

# Future of health care in Canada



determined standard of seven-to-nine minutes of attention. People need expert lifestyle advice and counselling to make changes that promote better health. They're finding the solution in naturopathic medicine."

While not quite everyone has been won over, the numbers are definitely growing. In 2006, the Fraser Institute and Ipsos Reid found nearly three-quarters of Canadians (74 per cent) had used at least one alternative therapy sometime in their lives, and over 50 per cent had done so in the previous year. This was a significant increase over what researchers found when they asked the same question ten years earlier.

"Research on Ontario residents indicates that most people are seeking more comprehensive health care, but they are not sure whom they should consult," Bernhardt continues. "So, we realize that the College's role must grow – go beyond training naturopathic doctors and work on public awareness and outreach, informing people about what NDs can provide to the health-care system. But we need evidence to back us up and the right communication tools to deliver the message."

The need for objective, supporting third-party validation has prompted the College to step up its own efforts to

be recognized as a research institution. It recently partnered with Canada Post Corporation and Canadian Union of Postal Workers, launching three separate studies to empirically evaluate the efficacy of naturopathic treatments for employees suffering from back pain, stress and anxiety, and rotator-cuff tendonitis.

Another key strategy is to lobby to have naturopathic medicine more fully recognized as a component of Canada's established health-care system, and eventually funded as such. Here too, CCNM has been active, joining with three other organizations to lobby for legislative changes. Ontario's recently tabled Bill 171, the Health System Improvements Act, 2007, is a key step on that path, calling for the establishment of a new regulatory college and regulations for naturopathic medicine.

The ever-increasing awareness about naturopathic medicine and the government's attempts to raise the bar with respect to regulation underscores the need for coordination and leadership in the field. Data and information must be evaluated and managed so it can be properly assessed for a knowledge-hungry public. CCNM's new branding and communications strategies will help here, giving the public easy-to-recognize symbols, so they know the information they're getting is from a reputable source.

"Naturopathy is a tradition, but that doesn't mean it doesn't change," Bernhardt explains. "In some ways, our new logo suggests nature and natural approaches. While the tree symbol has an inherent sense of reaching back to the past, it also suggests the "tree of knowledge"—the concept of evidence-based mechanisms for treatment."

It also conjures images of roots and growth, a living thing that's reaching upward and outwards, while providing comfort, strength, stability and consistency – all things that CCNM must do and be as we work to change the future of health care in Canada. A tall order for a brand identity? Maybe. An enormous task for CCNM? Definitely. But we're confident that both can, and will, deliver.



# Zeynep Uraz

## new coordinator

brings knowledge of naturopathic medicine to the role

CCNM's new coordinator of continuing education and alumni relations has a good idea about the kind of professional development courses that will benefit NDs. That's because she is a naturopathic doctor herself.

Zeynep Uraz, ND, accepted the coordinator position after completing a one-year residency at the Robert Schad Naturopathic Clinic (RSNC), where she cared for patients and was a teaching assistant.

While she continues to be involved with clinical activities, Zeynep's new role will allow her to use her knowledge of naturopathic medicine to ensure that CCNM's continuing education courses are of high quality and meet the needs of the profession.

"I want to have a good, solid continuing education program that offers something

of high relevance and high applicability for all practicing NDs, and that's also accessible for those outside the Greater Toronto Area," says Uraz.

One of the items she is working on is a new practice management series that will help give new NDs the tools that they need to succeed.

"We're looking at what is already available—the course that is currently in the curriculum and the material provided by the OAND are both good – but we want to supplement this," she says. "We want to help NDs not only efficiently run their practices, but also effectively market their practices."

As well, she plans to develop new courses that cover all the naturopathic modalities and that support a well-rounded continuing education program.

"We'd like to hear from CCNM graduates regarding ideas for upcoming courses, so that the various interests of our many grads are addressed."

Uraz is also looking at ways to provide access to continuing education courses for NDs located outside Toronto, possibly through web-based courses or by offering them at satellite locations in other cities in Canada.

While these new responsibilities will keep her busy, Uraz is also supervising a weekly shift at the RSNC and coordinates CCNM's 3rd-year Women's and Men's Health course. She continues to maintain her private practice as well.

"It's important to me to stay involved both clinically and academically," says Uraz.

"It allows me to stay current and relevant, which also helps me in assessing and developing new courses for the profession. I'm excited and it's going to be fun!" Contact Zeynep Uraz, ND, at [zuraz@ccnm.edu](mailto:zuraz@ccnm.edu).



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# vietnam initiative

offers excellent externship opportunity



Michelle Chin conducting a pulse examination

*“The doctors who worked closely with us noted to us that they were impressed by our training and knowledge.”*

In August, six of CCONM’s fourth-year interns, along with supervisor Arvin Jenab, ND, traveled to Hanoi, Vietnam, to work for a month at the National Hospital of Traditional Medicine. This clinical externship experience provided the students with an incredible learning opportunity and exposure to new and innovative traditional medical protocols. In addition, the patients in the host community benefited enormously from the care provided.

“The hospital we were at is such an amazing model for integrative health care,” says Christine Nguyen, one of the interns who traveled to Vietnam. “All the doctors who work there are trained both in modern medicine and traditional medicine, and do an exceptional job at melding the two in the best interests of the patient.”

The National Hospital of Traditional Medicine (NHTM) is a leading hospital of traditional medicine and a World Health Organization (WHO) collaborating centre. It provides support and guidance to 53 traditional medical hospitals nationwide.

Interns spent three hours each morning visiting a wide range of patients in the hospital and participated in interviewing, assessing and diagnosing patients. Often, the department heads themselves guided the students and facilitated their learning. The format was similar to an internship that medical students would undergo in a hospital setting; they rotated through various departments, received focused training, and then applied their knowledge and clinical skills to real patients.

In the afternoons, interns spent two to three hours discussing cases and learning the theory of traditional Asian medicine. These lectures and discussions enhanced interns’ understanding of the traditional Asian medical approach to diagnosing and treating specific diseases, providing a framework for their clinical work with patients.

# Integra's practice management program

helps NDs solve business challenges

Although CCNM provides an excellent practice management curriculum in third and fourth years, many students leave the program unprepared for the challenges of running a practice. To help prepare new (and not so new) alumni for the challenges of business life, CCNM and Integra Nutrition Inc. are launching a new initiative, Developing a Successful Practice – Integra Practice Management, which encompasses three integrated elements:

> **INTEGRA PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SERIES**

> **CONSULTATIONS FOR SUCCESS – INTEGRA PRACTICE MANAGEMENT; AND**

> **INTEGRA BUSINESS TIPS PODCAST**

The combination is intended to spark student interest in practice management through a high-profile speaker series available to them throughout their time at CCNM, provide personalized advice through a one-on-one focused consultation exploring their personal plans for establishing a practice, and provide them with “just-in-time” learning modules (podcasts) that they can access as they work to make their practice successful.

“I am delighted by the nature of this partnership,” says Bob Bernhardt, CCNM

the problem and we have done so in a way that integrates well with the contributions from the other associations who are also providing support to new graduates.”

Before launching this initiative, CCNM consulted the OAND, CAND and BCNA to ensure that that the format is complementary to the support provided by these other organizations. General consensus indicates that this expanded support is sorely needed.

“CCNM is proud of the significant upgrades to its practice management courses that have been completed over the last several years, primarily under the leadership of Iva Lloyd, ND, but we recognize that academic courses alone – no matter how well structured – are just not enough,” explains Bernhardt. A 2006 survey completed in conjunction with the lobbying for regulatory change in Ontario determined that 55 per cent of NDs with five or less years of experience were seeing 10 or fewer patient visits per week.

“A healthy profession cannot be sustained with this level of activity for so many of the new graduates,” adds Bernhardt. “Moreover, when students became aware of the statistics, it created a strong, as-yet-unmet demand from our students for more training in practice management.”

Zeynep Uraz, ND, CCNM's continuing education coordinator, agrees. “Many of my colleagues indicate a need for ongoing support in building their practices,” she says. “We are identifying those needs, and working hard to create a program that supports them.”

Integra Nutrition's successful business practices, (including its primary line of Alpha Science products), and its relationship with the naturopathic profession present a unique learning opportunity for alumni and students.

“We believe that the most effective learning with respect to practice management occurs when learners are exposed to a combination of business professionals and practising NDs,” says Tom Lawless, president of Integra Nutrition Inc. “We have been in business for 10 years, and the trust our clients have put in our products and services has led to our success; the relationship we have with the naturopathic profession is not one we take lightly, and now is the time for us to give back in a significant way.

“Integra is privileged to work with CCNM to deliver this much-needed business development and practice management program to the profession. Naturopathic doctors have helped us succeed; now we want to help each naturopathic doctor realize success as well.”



president. “Jointly CCNM and Integra identified and analyzed an important challenge for the profession, we have designed a creative approach to address

*The following activities will provide learning opportunities to both students and graduates that can be accessed in line with their personal learning style and needs.*



### THE INTEGRAL PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SERIES

Each year CCNM will organize a series of practice management sessions exposing students to the expertise and experiences of a combination of business professionals and NDs with successful practices. Lecturers will cover topics such as financing, marketing, communications, and staffing. This series will be made available to the entire student body and graduates through evening lectures that will be two to three hours in duration. In addition, we hope to record these lectures and make them available by podcast to graduates outside of the GTA.



### CONSULTATIONS FOR SUCCESS — INTEGRAL PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

The Developing a Successful Practice—Integral Practice Management program will utilize business professionals available for consultations with fourth-year students. CCNM will engage business specialists versed in providing advice and direction on developing a business plan for the naturopathic profession. They will be available by appointment to fourth-year students and will provide a neutral source of business expertise, assisting the students in building a solid business plan. When the experts are on campus we will tape short vignettes that will be grouped into segments by topic area that will subsequently be distributed on DVD and through video streaming.



### THE INTEGRAL BUSINESS TIPS PODCAST

With the growth of technology and the technical savvy of CCNM students and alumni, it is now possible to provide information through the internet in the form of "podcasting". CCNM will record a series of business tips which will be uploaded to the College's website. Students and graduates can access the information and listen to the tips online or download them to a computer or MP3 portable device. The podcast will have a regular host and provide a 2-3 minute vignette of current business tips and interviews

with successful naturopathic doctors. We believe that having testimonials, real-life experiences, and business tips available to students and graduates will allow them to learn from the successes of other professionals in their field. In addition, students and alumni will be able to submit questions and ideas to the College for future podcasts. The Integra podcast will become an interactive business program helping both students and graduates solve the challenges of running a practice.

Integra's practice management program will commence in 2008. For more information, contact Zeynep Uraz, ND, at zuraz@ccnm.edu.



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**Tom Lawless**  
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## you can help ccnm change the future of health care

Health care tomorrow can be better than health care today. The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine is on the vanguard of this change, but to drive these changes, we need your support. We need funds to do the research required to validate naturopathic approaches and to establish the positive economics associated with naturopathic medical care. We need funds to help spread the message to politicians, government officials and the public that naturopathic medicine can provide a kinder, gentler approach to health management.

Every year our donors' generosity helps CCNM achieve our mission to educate, develop and train naturopathic doctors through excellence in health education, clinical services and research that integrate mind, body and spirit. CCNM receives no direct financial support from government, so our financial health depends on the generosity and commitment of our supporters who believe in helping us further naturopathic medicine and research.

There are a variety of ways to "give back" to the College and help change the future of health care in Canada:

- > When your patients express interest in contributing to the field of naturopathic medicine or to the College, please pass along one of our new donation brochures. Please contact the advancement office if you need more brochures for your clinic.
- > Consider making a gift that becomes an annual scholarship helping students in need, donated personally or through your business.
- > Become a fundraising volunteer and sit on CCNM's fundraising committee.
- > Plan your own fundraising event to generate donations to support the College. We can help you set up an online event page so that your friends and family can make their donations through the internet.

- > Monthly donations are a convenient way to give back to CCNM. Automatic payments are withdrawn on the 15th of each month and you receive a tax receipt at the beginning of the year.
- > Find out if your company is willing to match your donation.
- > Make a donation to the area of your specific interest. You can support research, the clinic or any area important to you.

### COMMEMORATIVE GIVING HELPS CCNM CHANGE THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE

- > Make a tribute donation in honour of someone you care about. A card will be sent to that person to let them know a gift was made to commemorate them. This is a great idea for the holidays, birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, weddings or as a "thank you."
- > Weddings can be a great time to "give back" to the College. The couple may wish to ask friends and family to make a donation in lieu of wedding gifts, or they may wish to make a donation in honour of their guests, instead of handing out wedding favours.

### LEGACY GIVING HELPS CCNM CHANGE THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE

- > Leave a legacy and include CCNM in your will. A bequest is a wonderful way to ensure the College continues to improve access to primary care practitioners. Contact your lawyer to express your intention and please let the College know so that we can express our appreciation.

To re-order donation brochures for your clinic, find out how to leave CCNM in your will or to make a donation, please contact the advancement department.

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## the CAND corner

The CAND wishes to thank all its members for renewing their membership for 2008, which will help us ensure that NDs continue to have a strong, unified national voice and presence.

Plans are well underway for the CAND's third Health Fusion conference to be held in Montréal, Québec in June 2009. We are enthusiastic about holding Health Fusion in *la belle province*, as it will increase exposure for the profession in Québec and promote regulatory support for the province's regulated NDs.

Each year, the CAND participates in a number of key corporate conferences on behalf of its members. The first of these will be the Canada Health and Life Insurance Association conference in May. Attended by senior claims management, this conference affords the CAND the opportunity to educate the insurance industry on the value of providing coverage for naturopathic services.

Members of the CAND continue to receive an increasing volume of interview requests and coverage from mainstream media. Link to our "NDs on the Cutting Edge" and "Media Room" pages at [www.cand.ca](http://www.cand.ca) for the latest news. The public is also showing an increasing interest in the benefits of naturopathic medicine, as evidenced by the more than 42,000 unique visits to our website every month.

Our Naturopathic Medicine Week (NMW) committee is busy organizing the profession's biggest and best public awareness week yet. Get involved by planning your clinic open house or public lectures. Log in to our members-only website for NMW support tools, such as presentation and poster templates. While on the site, be sure you check out CAND-branded promotional items, including our new French prescription pads.

The Winter 2008 Vital Link journal will focus on autoimmune diseases and hit members' mailboxes at the end of February. Major changes to the Vital Link's content, format and appearance implemented during the last couple of years have been well received by the membership. We encourage you to continue providing your feedback on how the CAND can improve its internal and external initiatives. We wish everyone a prosperous first quarter!

**Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors – [www.cand.ca](http://www.cand.ca)**

## practice tips

### MAINTAIN A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

The image that patients have of you and your clinic is affected by everything they encounter during their visit. To ensure that you project a professional image, put prescription labels on all supplements that you give patients and write out treatment recommendations on a prescription pad. Ensure that your labels, prescription pads and any information that you give patients includes your name and your clinic's name, address and phone number.

**Iva Lloyd, BScH, RPP, ND**

### KEEP YOUR RECORDS ON TRACK

Having had a clinic for four years, I realize how much more efficiently a practice can run when there are proper organizational systems in place — something that one often learns only through trial and error. Spend the money needed right from the start to get an accountant to properly set up QuickBooks (or another accounting package). Daily checking of accounts, regular bookkeeping and monthly reconciliations are necessary to keep records on track and easy to find for future reference. When preceptoring, it's a good idea to ask lots of questions about administration and accounting systems and how records are filed and kept in order.

**Carol Zawada, B.Kin., ND**

## alumni updates

**Melissa Blake**, ND, (Class of 2006) has opened her own clinic, The Pear Tree, in Sackville, New Brunswick – the first naturopathic clinic in town. She focuses on family health through detoxification, nutrition and TCM. She is also working to educate the public about the benefits of natural medicine and the differences between NDs and generic “naturopaths” (NDs are not yet regulated in New Brunswick), and offers cooking classes. Melissa is “enjoying every minute” of being a naturopathic doctor.

**David W. Lescheid**, Bsc, PhD, ND and **Kristy Lewis**, RHN, ND, (Class of 2006) recently opened Pure Med Naturopathic Centre in Ottawa, Ontario. To find more information about their multidisciplinary clinic visit the website at [www.puremednaturopathic.com](http://www.puremednaturopathic.com).

**Jonathan Beatty**, ND, (Class of 2007) recently joined the Center for Healing and Personal Potential in Pickering, Ontario. The clinic is a multidisciplinary operation that offers complete health care options to maximize clients' overall health and health maintenance programs. The clinic offers naturopathic medicine, chiropractic, osteopathy, massage therapy, personal training, life counselling and many other services.

**Shanon Munkley**, ND, (Class of 2007) is practicing at Balanced Integrated Healthcare, a multidisciplinary clinic in the Liberty Village area of Toronto.

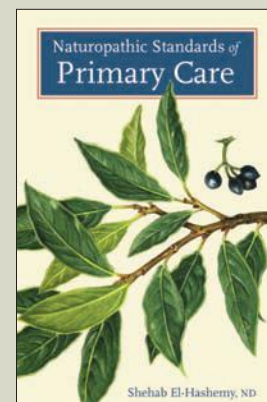
**Aparna Nirdosh**, ND, (Class of 2007) is practicing at her new clinic, Lakehead Naturopathic Health Clinic ([www.lakeheadnhc.com](http://www.lakeheadnhc.com)), in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Aparna has a general family practice but maintains a special interest in integrative cancer care.

**Keith Condliffe**, ND, (Class of 2007) is practicing in Milton, Ontario, at the Renascent Integral Health Centre, where he joins Mikhael Adams, ND, and Alison Adams, D.Ac., OATCM. More information about their clinic is available at [www.integralhealth.ca](http://www.integralhealth.ca).

**Joanna Thiessen**, ND, (Class of 2006) is practicing at her clinic, George Street Naturopathic Medicine, in Waterloo, Ontario. She writes, “Things are going really well, and I am enjoying working in my new community of Waterloo. Over the past year I have had the opportunity to attend several births as a Doula, and this experience has been fantastic. My son Cedar is now two years old and continues to make me laugh everyday.”

**Dugald Seely**, M.Sc., ND, (CCNM's director of research) has been appointed to the Expert Advisory Committee for the Vigilance of Health Products (EAC-VHP). Dugald has agreed to a committee term that expires in 2010. The purpose of the committee is to help advise the assistant deputy minister to the Federal Health Minister in the process of revamping Health Canada's approach to the safety of all health products, including pharmaceuticals, natural health product, medical devices, and any other product used to directly impact personal health.

**Do you have news you would like to share with CCNM alumni? Send us a brief update on what you are doing (e.g., a practice you may have recently opened or are involved with). Email Randall Meier, senior communications officer, at [rmeier@ccnm.edu](mailto:rmeier@ccnm.edu).**



## ccnm press news

Outlining a systematic program for mastering the critical skills of the primary care physician, *Naturopathic Standards of Primary Care* is a guide for navigating uncharted waters in the field



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# less pain, more gain

CCNM'S RESEARCH IS HELPING CANADA POST AND THE CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS (CUPW) IMPROVE HEALTH – BOTH FOR THE WORKERS AND POTENTIALLY, THE BOTTOM LINE

What do you call a program that makes people feel better, helps a company reduce drug costs and provides proof positive, or at least, statistically significant, that naturopathic medicine is effective? Answer: a keeper!

It was a perfect storm of opportunity for Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine's (CCNM) Kieran Cooley, ND and Orest Szczurko, ND. As young and enthusiastic researchers, they were looking for opportunities to conduct meaningful investigations in naturopathic medicine. It was an area that the College had targeted for greater development, recognizing that evidenced-based information was key to expanding the field and helping it gain wider acceptance.

"There's a lack of empirical research about naturopathic medicine and remedies, and very little is published about it in the scientific community," says Cooley, who graduated from CCNM in 2003. "We need evidence to support the treatments we prescribe, to inform the profession and help fill the knowledge gap."

So, when Canada Post and one of its employees' unions, CUPW, approached the College for help in addressing some of their workers' health issues, the decision to launch the study was an easy one.

"For us, the project really started four years ago," says Nancy Winship, who manages the benefit project for Canada Post. "Both the Corporation and the CUPW were looking at the benefit plans we provide for our 70,000 employees. We wanted to find a way to reduce costs and improve the health of our workers at the same time."



## IN BRIEF...

CCNM's study, *Naturopathic Care for Chronic Low Back Pain: A Randomized Trial*, looked at the effects of naturopathic treatment on low back pain. It's a complaint that affects millions every day and is one of the most common reasons people miss work and need pain medication and treatment.

Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers jointly supported the study at the Corporation's huge processing facility in Mississauga, Ontario. Participation was voluntary, with 75 of the 84 employees who were screened being accepted to the

program. Half the participants were assigned to a control group that received only an information package of care suggestions. The other half – the experimental group – received individualized information packets and 12 weeks of naturopathic treatments that included semi-weekly acupuncture therapy, anti-inflammatory supplements and counselling to address diet, hydration and lifestyle issues.

Researchers tracked participants throughout the 12 weeks of the study and for a four-week crossover period afterwards. The Oswestry Low Back Pain and Disability Questionnaire

was administered to evaluate the amount of pain each participant experienced both before and after the study was completed. Flexibility and the amounts of analgesics each employee used during the course of the study were also assessed and tracked. Quality of life was measured through the widely accepted SF-36 survey tool.

The 37 people in the experimental group reported a 20-per-cent decrease in pain and a significant increase in lumbar flexibility compared to virtually no change in the control group.

“The Corporation was already providing some compensation for certain kinds of naturopathic treatments,” says Denis Lemelin, second national vice-president of CUPW. “But when we asked our members what issues they wanted raised at the bargaining table, better reimbursement for a wider variety of naturopathic treatments and remedies was on the list.” Their mutual interest brought union representatives and management together, and in 2003 they struck a committee to investigate how the health of employees could be improved. A colleague put them in touch with CCNM.

“When we saw the College, the research it was doing and the rigorous training it was providing, we knew this was a credible, professional organization that we wanted to work with,” Winship explains.

The first of three studies took place in 2005, and low back pain was specifically chosen to be the focus. “There are many reasons back trouble is so prevalent,” says Cooley, “and not just at Canada Post. Aging and lifestyle – sitting in a chair at work for extended periods is a major contributor. People also need education about posture and what steps they can take to promote health. We’re a busy, demand-driven society, and one of the first things that people let go when they are busy is exercise. Often, our backs pay the price.”

“We chose a large, metropolitan facility for the study,” says Lemelin. “Not only was it easier to involve people in a large operation, but we knew we’d get the collaboration we

needed there. The shop stewards conducted information sessions with their co-workers, and the College’s naturopathic doctors spoke to employee groups as well. They did a wonderful job of making participants feel comfortable and educating them about health issues.”

The results were overwhelmingly positive. The experimental group experienced a decided reduction in pain and increase in flexibility compared to the control group. Many also reported improvements in other areas of their life as the pain decreased and they were able to move more easily and sleep better.

“It was a win-win situation,” says Cooley. “It was an example of how the union and

Canada Post was delighted to have supported a program that helped employees improve their health and experience less pain. “While it’s too soon to talk about tangible financial benefits to the Corporation, a similar study based in the U.S. clearly showed that there were benefits to organizations, such as less absenteeism and reduced costs to the company health plan,” says Cooley. “These translated into savings that more than made up for the investments made in the study.” Cooley added that the return on investment for the U.S. companies was estimated to be 7.9 per cent – meaning that for every \$100 spent on naturopathic treatments and remedies, there was almost \$108 in benefits such as less sick time and reduced medication costs.



management could join together in a health-related research effort at Canada Post. One of the most significant downstream effects was that the union was able to negotiate an increase in reimbursement for naturopathic care for employees.”

“In a nutshell,” says Winship, “when people are healthier and happier, they’re far more willing to come to work, do their best and meet customers with a positive outlook. How can everyone, company included, not benefit from that?”

At the end of the 12-week treatment portion of the study, participants from the control group were given the opportunity to experience some of the naturopathic treatments for a four-week period. Thirteen people opted to “cross over” and take advantage of the therapies the experimental group had been receiving. They, too, reported marked improvements. A follow-up questionnaire was sent to participants six months after the study was completed. Responses indicated that all who received treatment(s) had maintained at least some of the improvement they had experienced while in the program.

### RESEARCH CONTINUES...

A second study that CCNM conducted with Canada Post and the CUPW looked at treating stress and work-related psychological issues with naturopathic medicine. Eighty people participated, some of whom received herbal remedies, counselling about breathing exercises, and overall dietary and lifestyle changes. Researchers found a significant drop in reported levels of stress and anxiety among the experimental group as compared to the control. The full results of the study are now being compiled for publication.

### AND CONTINUES...

A third study in the series examined the treatment of chronic shoulder pain. The results from this study are currently being compiled. And a fourth study—larger and multi-centred—is currently being discussed.

"Patients at the hospital are given really top-notch care," says Nguyen. "They can feel confident that they're getting the best of both worlds, both modern and traditional, in terms of their treatment."

Spending an entire month in Vietnam was a unique opportunity for any student wishing to delve deeper into the art and practice of Traditional Asian Medicine theory and practice. The training program at the NHTM meets the standards employed for the training of naturopathic doctors at CCNM.

"Not only did it provide exposure to a wide range of pathologies not commonly seen here in Toronto, such as chronic thrombo-arteritis obliterans, but it shed new light on common pathologies such as diabetes, insomnia, infertility and hypertension," explains Nguyen.

In addition, daily discussion of Asian herbs as well as a full day in the herbal dispensary sorting and watching the decoction of herbal formulations allowed the students a hands-on introduction to Eastern herbs not taught at CCNM.



Chris Pickrell performing cupping procedure

"The most intriguing realization for me was seeing how well-trained we are at CCNM in our TCM theory and practice," added Nguyen. "The National Hospital of Traditional Medicine has been training hundreds of students,

nurses, doctors, and practitioners from Vietnam, Switzerland, United States, India, Germany and now Canada. The doctors who worked closely with us noted to us that they were impressed by our training and knowledge."

"While there is always room to grow, I left Vietnam confident in knowing that I have gained a valuable TAM (traditional Asian medicine) education, rooted in a strong theoretical and practical foundation. Despite the differences, whether it's using tube-guided or free hand needling techniques, that foundation is strong, valuable and transferable in Canada, in Vietnam and elsewhere in the world."

Visit the National Hospital of Traditional Medicine at <http://www.yhcotruyentw.org.vn/>

For more information about the CCNM externship, contact Arvin Jenab, ND, at [arvinjenab@hotmail.com](mailto:arvinjenab@hotmail.com)

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# primary care series

offers opportunity to develop case-management skills

CCNM and the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors have partnered to offer the 2008 CCNM/OAND Primary Care Series.

This series has been developed to review and update the practical and scholarly breadth of knowledge required for NDs to deliver safe, effective primary care services to patients. Naturopathic primary care providers are often the first professional contact for both preventive and therapeutic medical care. This series is designed to cultivate the ND's case-management skills and allow for the development of contemporary best practice guidelines of naturopathic primary care.

The CCNM/OAND Primary Care Series provides balanced and current information to attendees, bringing forward the unique role of today's NDs as credentialed practitioners of safe, effective and individualized primary care medicine.

The six lectures that comprise this third annual series will be co-presented by noted experts in the field to offer the latest in assessment and case management, combining a rich experience in clinical practice with the latest research in clinical medicine.

#### THE OBJECTIVE OF EACH LECTURE IS TO:

- > review and update practical and scholarly knowledge required to deliver effective primary care services;
- > critically appraise the reasoning behind current best practices to cultivate the practitioner's case-management skills;
- > develop the practitioner's skills in identifying emergency cases and recognizing when referrals are needed;
- > deliver a synopsis of current primary care concepts; and
- > provide NDs with readily accessible primary care material.

#### SERIES SCHEDULE

The six lectures in the 2008 series will run on Wednesdays from 7–10 p.m. At press time, session dates are scheduled as follows (please check [www.ccnm.edu](http://www.ccnm.edu) to confirm dates):

**Excellence in Primary Care** – February 13

**Pediatrics** – March 5

**Pain** – March 26

**Dermatology** – April 30

**Fatigue** – May 21

**Pregnancy** – June 11

The lectures will be held at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, 1255 Sheppard Ave. E., Toronto. To register, contact Kim Appleton at the OAND at 416-233-2001 extension 25 or email [membership@oand.org](mailto:membership@oand.org).

of primary health care. Author Shehab El-Hashemy, ND, concisely compares and contrasts current best practices, primary evidence, secondary resources and published expert opinions to develop the reader's competency in first-line assessment and management of common primary care presentations.

*Naturopathic Standards of Primary Care* offers NDs a convenient resource for managing common presentations.

It references guidelines for naturopathic approaches – including diet and exercise approaches, clinical nutrition, botanical medicines – as well as current medical and surgical treatment options.

The book also features applied clinical modules in cardiology, ear, nose and throat, diabetes, gastroenterology, hematology, immunology and genetics, infectious diseases, nephrology, neurology, orthopedics, psychiatry, pulmonology, rheumatology and urology.

Common clinical challenges and licensing exam questions are posed, and followed by well-reasoned answers for creating safe and effective management plans. It includes 50 case-based review questions that simulate actual primary care clinical practice.

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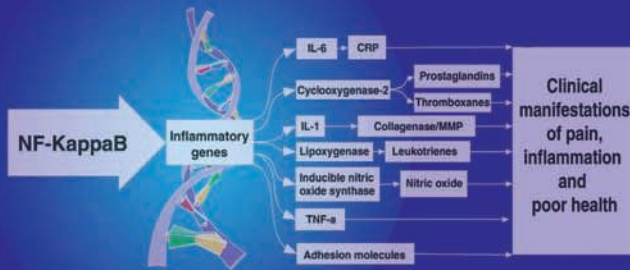
## celebrating 30 years of naturopathic education

CCNM is busy planning a slate of events for its upcoming 30th anniversary celebration. If you have any group photos, class photos, yearbooks or other information you're willing to share, please contact Kim Fisher, executive assistant to the president, at [kfisher@ccnm.edu](mailto:kfisher@ccnm.edu).

## calling alumni ambassadors!

Do you keep in touch with your classmates? Are you currently a member of the Alumni Association? If so, we're looking for you! As an alumni ambassador, you will be a representative for others in your graduation year—much like the class reps were when you were at CCNM. We want to help alumni from all years keep in touch and share information. If you have your “finger on the pulses” of your graduation year and would like to participate, please contact Peter Mayhew, director, advancement, at [pmayhew@ccnm.edu](mailto:pmayhew@ccnm.edu).

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