
Health Care Committee

HB 1388

Brief Description: Regulating naturopathic physicians.

Sponsors: Representatives Ruderman, Campbell, Cody, Conway, Edmonds, Edwards, Dickerson and McIntire.

Brief Summary of Bill

- The practice of naturopathy is expanded to include the use of legend drugs and controlled substances in schedules III-V appropriate to naturopathic medicine, including injections and the scope of minor office procedures and diagnostic procedures.
- The Secretary of Health must do an analysis of the appropriateness of acupuncture in naturopathic practice and form a work group to identify areas of practice requiring an acupuncture endorsement.

Hearing Date: 1/24/02

Staff: John Welsh (786-7133).

Background:

The practice of naturopathy is a health profession licensed by the Department of Health and includes the art and science of the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of disorders of the body by stimulation or support, or both, of the natural processes of the human body.

The use of the titles of naturopath and doctor of naturopathic medicine are restricted to licensed naturopathic practitioners. A naturopath may not employ the term chiropractic in practice.

The practice of naturopathy includes medicines of mineral, animal, and botanical origin that are administered orally and topically, including vitamins, minerals and whole gland thyroid, but otherwise excludes legend (prescription) drugs. Intermuscular injections are limited to Vitamin B-12 preparations.

Naturopaths may perform minor office procedures such as care of superficial lacerations and removal of foreign bodies in superficial structures, as well as the use of antiseptic and topical

anesthetics.

Naturopaths may also perform common diagnostic procedures such as venipuncture and the withdrawing of blood, and commonly used diagnostic modalities such as radiology, but, excludes surgical incision.

Summary of Bill:

The reference to naturopath is changed to naturopathic physician, and the term naturopathic medicine is added to the practice of naturopathy. The use of the additional titles of naturopathic physician and natural medicine practitioner are limited to those who are licensed. A practitioner may not employ the term acupuncture in practice.

Naturopathic medicines include legend drugs and controlled substances listed in schedules III-V consistent with naturopathic medical practice determined by rule of the Secretary of Health. It also includes vitamins, homeopathic medicines, hormones, and other physiologic substances in naturopathic medical texts; and intermuscular, intramuscular, intravenous, subcutaneous and intradermal injections appropriate to naturopathic medicine. A practitioner may compound, dispense, or sell naturopathic medicines not available by prescription, excluding controlled substances and legend drugs. The practitioner is exempt from the requirements of the practice laws when dispensing or selling medicines or products from the office.

The practice of minor office procedures is expanded to include trigger point therapy, dermal stimulation, and allergy testing and treatment.

Diagnostic procedures exclude surgical excision beyond minor office procedures, and includes the ordering, but not the interpretation, of ultrasonic images.

Naturopathic physicians may employ and utilize persons to assist in the use of equipment for colonic therapy as determined by the secretary by rule.

The department must conduct an analysis of the appropriateness of using such techniques as auricular, hand therapy, and other practices associated with acupuncture, and appoint a work group to identify areas requiring an endorsement for the practice for acupuncture. The report shall be submitted to the Legislature by January 14, 2002.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.