Naturopathic Medicine plays credible complementary role in improving Canadians' health
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Canada’s Naturopathic Doctors (NDs) are trained to address the fundamental causes of disease, treating the whole person through an individualized approach with a particular focus on prevention and wellness.

NDs provide care to patients that is complementary, not “alternative” to conventional medicine. They do not hold a “philosophical aversion” to science, surgery or pharmaceuticals.

Yet, this is not the conclusion one reaches after reading a National Post article entitled Naturopathy is poised to 'disrupt' health-care status quo, proponents of controversial practice say, first published on September 27, 2019. The Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors (CAND) was not contacted to provide information or perspective for the piece.

The National Post article in question uses a recent academic article published in Medicina, a peer-reviewed scientific journal, as an opportunity to characterize the field of naturopathic medicine as “controversial”, “supernatural” “nonsense”.

We strongly challenge this characterization and maintain that the “evidence” used to support these unfair claims is incomplete, one-sided and lacking in journalistic integrity.

The Medicina article states that naturopathy has the potential to be a “disruptive innovation in health care.” In laymen’s terms, this means that using naturopathic medicine as a regular and systematic “first step” in health care could help divert those patients away from the conventional health system who do not need it – reducing costs and reallocating medical resources more effectively to better serve patients with the greatest need.

It is not “controversial” to want to improve health outcomes for Canadians by increasing the focus on prevention through closer collaboration between conventional and complementary health care professionals.

Indeed, the World Health Organization (WHO) has identified Traditional and Complementary Medicine (T&CM) – which includes naturopathic medicine – in a 2019 report as “an important and often underestimated health resource with many applications, especially in the prevention and management of lifestyle-related chronic diseases.”