

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

10 JUL 15 11:44

SENATE  
S. No. 1460

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Naturopathic medicine or naturopathy is a complementary and alternative medicine. Naturopathic practice may include different modalities such as manual therapy, hydrotherapy, herbalism, acupuncture, counselling, environmental medicine, aromatherapy, orthomolecular medicine, nutritional counselling, homeopathy, and chiropractic. Practitioners emphasize a holistic approach to patient care. Naturopathy has its origins in a variety of world medicine practices, including the Ayurveda of India and Nature Cure of Europe.

Naturopaths use standard medical diagnostic techniques to treat disease with natural medicines and therapies in lieu of pharmaceutical drugs and surgeries. These natural approaches include clinical nutrition, botanical medicine, homeopathy, lifestyle counselling, naturopathic physical medicine, natural childbirth and basic training in oriental medicine. At present, the *Philippines* does not have any laws to regulate the practice of naturopathy. Individuals who complete a home study course in as little as six (6) weeks can serve as a naturopath. This is a cause for concern as people's health and lives are put at risk by the improper practice of naturopathy. Hence, this bill seeks to establish educational requirements for the practice of naturopathic medicine in the Philippines. Specifically, to practice naturopathy in Philippines, the applicant for a professional license must a graduate of an accredited four-year residence training program; pass a national examination; be licensed as a naturopath in another jurisdiction; and meet any and all other requirements as set forth by the Board of Examiners.\*

*acv*  
*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

\* This bill was originally filed in the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress.

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1 AN ACT  
2 REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE OR NATUROPATHY  
3 IN THE PHILIPPINES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

4 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Naturopathic Medicine Act."

5 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is a policy of the State to promote the general  
6 welfare of the people. Towards this end, the State shall enact a law to regulate the practice of  
7 naturopathic medicine or naturopathy in the Philippines.

8 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For the purposes of this Act, the term:

9 (A) "Diagnose" means to examine in any manner another person, parts of a person's  
10 body, or substances, fluids, or materials excreted, taken, or removed from a person's body or  
11 produced by a person's body to determine the source, kind, or extent of a disease or other  
12 physical condition.

13 (B) "Minor Office Procedure" means the use of operative, electrical, or other methods for  
14 the repair of, and care incidental to, superficial lacerations and abrasions, the removal of foreign  
15 bodies located in superficial tissues, and the use of antiseptics and local anaesthetics in  
16 connection with these methods. The term includes the use of local anaesthesia applied topically  
17 or by injection, whether natural or prescription, in superficial tissues associated with the  
18 performance of minor office procedures. The term shall not include general or spinal anaesthesia,

1 major surgery, surgery of the body cavities, or specialized surgeries, including plastic surgery or  
2 surgery involving the eyes, tendons, ligaments, or major blood vessels.

3 (C) "Natural Antibiotics" means antimicrobial, antifungal, and antiprotozoal agents that  
4 are naturally occurring substances or manufactured substance that are substantially identical to  
5 the naturally occurring substances.

6 (D) "Natural Medicines" mean:

7 (1) Food, food extracts, and dietary supplements as defined by Republic Act No.  
8 7394, as amended, otherwise known as The Consumer Act of the Philippines;

9 (2) Homeopathic remedies;

10 (3) Plant substances that are not designated as prescription drugs or controlled  
11 substances;

12 (4) Over-the-counter medications;

13 (5) Prescriptions that are consistent with the competent practice of naturopathy;  
14 and

15 (6) Substances prepared according to the homeopathic pharmacopeia of the  
16 United States of America.

17 (E) "Naturopathic Childbirth" means uncomplicated natural childbirth assisted by a  
18 naturopathic physician. The term includes the use of natural substances, ophthalmic antibiotics,  
19 emergency childbirth medicines, and simple uncomplicated episiotomies, but does not include  
20 the use of forceps delivery, general or spinal anaesthesia, caesarean section, or induced abortion.

21 (F) "Naturopathic Medicine" or "Naturopathy" means a system of primary health care for  
22 the prevention, diagnosis, and care of human health conditions, injuries, and diseases that uses  
23 education and natural substances and remedies to support and stimulate the individual's intrinsic  
24 self-healing processes.

25 (G) "Naturopathic Mobilization Therapy" means manually administering mechanical  
26 treatment of body structures or tissues to restore the normal physiological function of the body  
27 by normalizing and balancing the musculoskeletal system of the body. The term does not include  
28 osseous manipulation.

1 (H) "Naturopathic Physician" means a person who holds the person out to the public as  
2 licensed to practice naturopathic medicine or who practices naturopathic medicine under this  
3 Act.

4 (I) "Naturopathic Physical Medicine" means the use of the physical agents of air, water,  
5 heat, cold, sound, light, and electromagnetic non-ionizing radiation and the physical modalities  
6 of electrotherapy, biofeedback, diathermy, ultraviolet light, ultrasound, hydrotherapy,  
7 naturopathic mobilization therapy, and exercise. The term does not include the practice of  
8 physical therapy, acupuncture, or chiropractic.

9 (J) "Topical preparations" means topical analgesics, anaesthetics, antiseptics, scabicides,  
10 antifungals, and antibacterials.

11 SECTION 4. *Practice of Naturopathic Medicine and Use of Title "Naturopathic*  
12 *Physician"*. - Only a person licensed or otherwise authorized under this act shall practice  
13 naturopathic medicine or use the title "Naturopath", "Doctor of Naturopathy", "Doctor of  
14 Naturopathic Medicine", or use the initials, "ND", or "NMD or hold oneself out to the public  
15 that they practice naturopathy in any of its forms.

16 SECTION 5. *Philippine Board of Naturopathic Medicine*. - (A) A Philippine Board of  
17 Naturopathic Medicine shall be appointed in the same manner as the appointment of Members of  
18 other professional boards to assist the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) on matters of  
19 professional licensing.

20 (B) The Board shall be composed of not less than seven (7) licensed naturopathic  
21 physicians who meet the requirements set forth in this Act. An Executive Secretary to the Board  
22 shall be appointed and shall be either a licensed naturopathic physician or a non-physician,  
23 deemed qualified.

24 (C) There shall be two (2) members of the Board from the medical or osteopathic  
25 community and no one discipline shall comprise both members.

1 SECTION 6. *Requirements for a Professional License.* - To qualify for a license as a  
2 naturopathic physician, an applicant shall fulfill the following requirements:

3 (A) Application. -The applicant shall file an application with the PRC.

4 (B) Education. - The applicant shall have received an education, including a degree of  
5 Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine, "N.D.", from an approved naturopathic college. For purposes  
6 of this section, the term "approved naturopathic college" means a college or residential program  
7 granting the degree of Doctor of Naturopathy or Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine that:

8 (1) Is accredited by an agency recognized by the government, the council for  
9 naturopathic medical education or its successor, or approved by the Board which meets  
10 the standards generally recognized and being met by other licensing jurisdictions;

11 (2) Has candidate for accreditation status with the accrediting agency; or

12 (3) Has been approved by the board after the college or residential program was  
13 investigated and found to meet education standards equivalent to those established by the  
14 accrediting agency and which meets the standards generally recognized and being met by  
15 other licensing jurisdictions;

16 (C) Experience. - The applicant shall have had experience as a naturopathic physician  
17 satisfactory to the board and in accordance with the commissioner's regulations;

18 (D) Examination. - The applicant shall have passed an examination satisfactory to the  
19 board and in accordance with the commissioner's regulations which may include the  
20 naturopathic physicians licensing examination or its successor; or other test that maintains the  
21 standards generally accepted nationally;

22 (E) Age. -The applicant shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age;

23 (F) Citizenship. - The applicant shall be a Filipino citizen;

24 (G) Character. - The applicant shall be of good moral character as determined by the  
25 Board; and

26 (H) Fees. - The applicant shall pay a fee as determined by the PRC for admission to a  
27 Board-conducted examination and for an initial license; a for each re-examination; and a fee for  
28 an initial license for persons not requiring admission to a Board-conducted examination;

1           SECTION 7. *Exempt Persons.* - The following persons under the following limitations  
2 may practice naturopathic medicine within the Philippines without a license:

3           (A) Any naturopathic physician who is employed as a resident in a public hospital,  
4 provided such practice is limited to such hospital and is under the supervision of a licensed  
5 naturopathic physician or other licensed physician;

6           (B) Any naturopathic physician who is licensed in another country and who is meeting a  
7 naturopathic physician licensed in the Philippines, for purposes of consultation, provided such  
8 practice is limited to such consultation;

9           (C) Any naturopathic physician who is licensed in another country, who is visiting a  
10 medical school or teaching hospital in the Philippines, receive naturopathic medical or medical  
11 instruction for a period not to exceed six (6) months or to conduct naturopathic medical or  
12 medical instruction, provided such practice is limited to such instruction and is under the  
13 supervision of a licensed naturopathic physician or other licensed physician;

14           (D) Any naturopathic physician who is authorized by a foreign government to practice in  
15 relation to its diplomatic, consular or maritime staffs, provided such practice is limited to such  
16 staffs;

17           (E) Any commissioned naturopathic medical officer who is serving in the United States  
18 Armed Forces or Public Health Service or any naturopathic physician who is employed in the  
19 United States Veterans Administration, provided such practice is limited to such service or  
20 employment;

21           (F) Any intern who is employed by a hospital and who is a graduate of a naturopathic  
22 medical school, provided such practice is limited to such hospital and is under the supervision of  
23 a licensed naturopathic physician or other licensed physician;

24           (G) Any naturopathic medical student who is performing a clinical clerkship or similar  
25 function in a hospital and who is matriculated in a naturopathic medical school which meets  
26 satisfactory standards, provided such practice is limited to such clerkship or similar function in  
27 such hospital;

28           (H) A person engaged in the sale of vitamins, health foods, dietary supplements, herbs, or  
29 other products of nature, the sale of which is not otherwise prohibited under Philippine law; or

1 (I) A person providing nutritional advice, giving advice concerning proper nutrition, or  
2 giving information as to the use and role of food and food ingredients, including dietary  
3 supplements, except that providing nutritional advice under this subdivision does not include the  
4 authority to practice medicine or surgery, to undertake the treatment or cure of a disease, pain,  
5 injury, deformity, or physical or mental condition, or to state that a product might cure a disease,  
6 pain, injury, deformity, or other condition other than providing nutritional support for the person.

7 SECTION 8. *Prohibited Acts; Penalties.* - It shall be unlawful for any person to hold  
8 himself out to the public as licensed to practice naturopathic medicine or who practices  
9 naturopathic medicine under this Act without having acquired a professional license under this  
10 Act. The offender shall be punished by a penalty of imprisonment of *arresto mayor*, or a fine of  
11 not more than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00), or both, at the discretion of the court, taking  
12 into consideration all attending circumstances.

13 This section shall not apply to those persons exempt from acquiring a professional license  
14 for the practice of naturopathic medicine under Section 7 of this Act.

15 SECTION 9. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - Within six (6) months from the  
16 passage of this Act, the Board of Naturopathic Medicine shall promulgate the necessary rules  
17 and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

18 SECTION 10. *Separability Clause.* - If any part hereof, is held invalid or  
19 unconstitutional, the remainder of the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and  
20 subsisting.

21 SECTION 11. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive  
22 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent  
23 with the provisions of this act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

1 SECTION 12. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
2 publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.