



FAQ for the Public

What does this mean for me?

Many Australians utilise complementary medicine practitioners and some use them as their primary point of care. Naturopaths and Western herbalists form amongst the largest complementary medicine professional group in Australia. Whilst many are well qualified and have high practice standards, there is no uniform minimum education standard for entry to practice. This makes it difficult to identify well qualified practitioners from poorly qualified ones, or even those with no training. There is currently no national uniform code of conduct for naturopaths and Western herbalists, nor is there a simple and comprehensive complaints mechanism for the public to access. This register will make choosing a naturopath or Western herbalist much safer and more effective.

Does this mean naturopaths and Western herbalists are not safe?

Naturopaths and Western herbalists utilise diet, lifestyle and over-the-counter treatments as part of their mode of practice. When practised competently with appropriate clinical judgement by suitably qualified health care professionals, these modalities have a good safety record. However, when practised incorrectly or by people without adequate training, these modalities have an inherent risk.

Will my naturopath or herbalist be on this register?

The process for registration is yet to be finalised. But based on registration experiences in other health professions it is likely that each practitioner will be assessed individually but as long as your naturopath or herbalist has gained appropriate qualifications during their training and practised without breach of conduct, your practitioner is likely to be grandparented into the register even if they don't have a modern degree qualification.

Won't this restrict my choice of practitioner?

No, you are still free to consult the practitioner of your choosing. The register is designed to increase your ability to make an informed choice. By choosing a practitioner on the register you can be assured that your practitioner is appropriately qualified and abides by an ethical code of conduct.



Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists



Aren't the professional associations registering practitioners?

There are a large number of professional associations for naturopaths and Western herbalists in Australia which provide practitioner accreditation. The problem arises from the fact that there are major differences in the minimum education and experience requirements to gain accreditation. This register independently sets a standard level of entry for membership so you can be assured that a practitioner is appropriately qualified no matter what professional association they belong to.