

2020 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE AUSTRALIAN REGISTER OF NATUROPATHS AND HERBALISTS

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

This year, ARONAH is celebrating our tenth year of operation – in December 2010 the first ARONAH meeting was held. In 2020 a milestone year, we have also had a year of profound global turmoil and uncertainty amid a pandemic. And yet amongst this uncertainty, at ARONAH we have been able to achieve a mammoth amount. 2020 may in fact be our best year yet.

The highlight has been the profession raising \$20,000 along with a matched generous donation from Marcus Blackmore to conduct a Naturopathic Regulation Research Project, which will ultimately further our push towards statutory registration. ARONAH is leading this project along with the wider support of the Australian Naturopathic Council (ANC).

The Private Health Insurance (PHI) rebate removal has again been a focus, with submissions from ARONAH to the government review process.

ARONAH is also conducting in a review of the educational standards of Naturopaths in Australia.

Throughout the year, ARONAH has collaborated with the members of the ANC in the writing of various government submissions as well as providing advice to stakeholders during the global pandemic.

This report overviews the key activities related to these areas.

ARONAH VALUES, VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

I thought it fitting in our tenth year that we revisit these values as a board and ensure they are still relevant to our work. These were last ratified by the board in 2012.

ARONAH Values

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Efficacy
- Fairness

ARONAH Vision

- promoting the safest and highest quality of professional practice.
- is an informative, user friendly and responsive body for promoting public health and safety, which engenders the confidence of the public, the profession, government and industry.
- advocates appropriate regulatory reform for naturopathy and Western herbal medicine

ARONAH Mission



Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists

- To promote continuous improvement of professional practice, through education, policy development and outcome evaluation
- To ensure that the broad policy frameworks are aligned to enable the achievement of good professional practice and the protection of public health and safety
- To be actively engaged with the profession, public and government through communication, information exchange, and dialogue
- To assure Board integrity through sound decision-making and effective processes

LOBBYING

2020 has been a year of video calls and emails rather than traditional face to face meetings.

In June along with the ANC, ARONAH started a Go Fund Me campaign to raise money to fund a campaign to continue the journey for statutory registration. We were thrilled to see so many generous naturopaths dig deep and donate to our work. We raised \$20,000 in just over 3 weeks. This amount was matched by Marcus Blackmore, who has a history of wanting the best for the profession of naturopath.

With this funding we have started the Naturopathic Regulation Research Project, which is a framework in which we will conduct some thorough research into the professions of naturopath and Western herbalist. As part of this, the 2005 Lin report will be updated. A highly experienced independent consultant, Dr Anne-Louise Carlton, has been brought in to assist with this mammoth task. Work on this began in September and will continue into 2021.

The Private Health Insurance review is also continuing and ARONAH submitted a very thorough document outlining the evidence for naturopathy and Western herbal medicine (WHM). ARONAH has been part of all stakeholder meetings regarding this PHI review as well.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

ARONAH has cemented a close working relationship with the ANC during 2020. We have worked in many areas together, sharing resources and expertise. The formation of the ANC in 2019 formalises the long-standing working relationship we have with the NHAA, and the more recent relationship with the Australian members of the World Naturopathic Federation (WNF).

Current members of the NCA are:

1. Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists (ARONAH)
2. Complementary Medicine Association (CMA)
3. Endeavour College of Natural Health (ECNH)
4. Southern School of Natural Therapies (SSNT)
5. Naturopaths and Herbalists Association of Australia (NHAA)

ARONAH board members are closely involved in various aspects of the WNF, including various research projects. ARONAH is proud to be an associate member of the WNF.



As part of our work with the ANC, ARONAH collaborated to write a submission to the federal government on their Preventative Health Strategy. We emphasised the usefulness of naturopaths through this governmental feedback request, in the hope that the skills of naturopaths may be applied in this area where we are experts.

The global pandemic has opened up the utilisation of telehealth to the mainstream population. ARONAH has been involved in discussions with both Australian educational institutions on the topic of telehealth, and providing advice on the introduction of telehealth delivery into the naturopathic and WHM degrees so that it is done safely and with the highest standards.

ARONAH was part of the Course Advisory Committee meetings for THINK education (SSNT/ACNT) in 2020. These course advisory meetings are an important part of any educational institution's consultation processes with the external naturopathic community. And ARONAH's participation ensures our high standards are being taught and achieved. Endeavour College of Natural Health has not held any Course Advisory Committee meetings in 2020.

ARONAH has been commissioned by Southern Cross University to conduct a review of the Education Standards for naturopaths in Australia. This work began in September and is a very large project to undertake. It is estimated that this will be completed early 2021.

SUSTAINABILITY

Membership growth has improved in 2020 as a direct flow on effect from the Go Fund Me Campaign.

As part of ARONAH's commitment to higher education, we endorse Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities to ensure our members have access to high quality, relevant and appropriate CPD that meets their ongoing educational needs at various stages of their careers. This is another income stream for ARONAH, however in 2020 this has been an underutilised aspect of ARONAH's services. Likely the global pandemic has played a large role in this.

A reminder that the ARONAH Board also provides a course accreditation service. The ARONAH board will assess educational programs and the capacity of the educational institution offering the award to do so, according to specified standards. The ARONAH Board considers not only the curriculum and the delivery of education but also the ability of the program to ensure quality outcomes, the resources available and the performance of graduates.



Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists

COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC TOWARDS NATUROPATHS AND WESTERN HERBALISTS

ARONAH is a port of call for members of the public to complain about the treatment they have received. Complaints regarding naturopaths and western herbalists are steady as time goes on. However, in 2020 the complaints that ARONAH has received are slightly fewer than in previous years. Mostly complaints centre around unprofessional service, missing major health issues or reactions to treatment.

- 2020 calendar year = 5
- 2019 calendar year = 6
- 2018 calendar year = 9
- 2017 calendar year = 5
- 2016 (Nov only) = 2

SOCIAL MEDIA

2020 has been a quieter year on social media, similar to 2019. However, ARONAH steadily gains followers on Facebook at over 3300 (which has grown by over 300 since last year). The affiliated group, Naturopaths for Registration also has over 2,200 members. Overwhelmingly this is still mostly positive engagement with most posts reaching likes in the double figures, as well as many favourable comments.

Report prepared by
Jackie Arbuckle
Chairperson - ARONAH
Ba Health Sci (naturopathy)
Grad Dip (psychology)
Ba App Sci (human biology)