

2025 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE AUSTRALIAN REGISTER OF NATUROPATHS AND HERBALISTS

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

In 2025 we are very pleased to welcome two additional board members to ARONAH. PhD candidate Jill Dunn, who will represent New Zealand, and Dr Anne-Louise Carlton who will be a community board member.

Jill Dunn is a naturopath and medical herbalist currently undertaking PhD research in partnership with the World Naturopathic Federation. Her work focuses on frameworks, and infrastructure, as well as regulation and education policy that shapes the global development of the naturopathic profession—expertise highly relevant to the ARONAH board. Her PhD is entitled: Mapping the naturopathic landscape: An examination of regulation and education, policy, frameworks and infrastructures in a global emerging profession.

Anne-Louise Carlton played a key role in the creation of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), drawing on her extensive experience in policy, regulatory reform, and direct service within state health and human services departments. She was instrumental in setting up Ahpra and supporting the formation of the 15 National Boards.

One of the main areas of work for ARONAH this year has been the National Education Accreditation Standards, which ARONAH finalised in 2021. The board have worked in collaboration with all Australian and New Zealand associations and colleges to review these standards and the documents associated with them.

The Naturopathic Regulation Research Project (NRRP) was finished in February this year. There was a soft launch at the NHAA conference in May this year. The next focus is on the application to government for registration.

As in previous years, ARONAH board members have participated in a range of meetings throughout the year, including those held by the World Naturopathic Federation, the Private Health Insurance review, and course advisory committees.

This report provides an overview of these significant activities, along with additional information pertinent to ARONAH.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Australian Naturopathic Council (ANC)

Background: Since its inception in 2019, the ANC has solidified its connection with Australian representatives of the World Naturopathic Federation. Throughout 2025, ARONAH has maintained an active and collaborative role within the ANC, further strengthening these ties.

Current members of the ANC are:

1. Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists (ARONAH)
2. Complementary Medicine Association (CMA)
3. Endeavour College of Natural Health (ECNH)
4. Naturopaths and Herbalists Association of Australia (NHAA)
5. Southern Cross University (SCU)
6. Torrens University

ARONAH regularly engaged with the ANC throughout the year, firstly, regarding the National Education Accreditation Standards (see Education section below) where meetings were held on average every 6 weeks for the entire year, as well as the Naturopathic Regulation Research Project (NRRP). The NRRP meetings were not as regular as the project has finished, but there were several meetings throughout the year regarding the application for registration of naturopaths and WHM practitioners under the National Registration Accreditation Scheme.

World Naturopathic Federation (WNF):

ARONAH participates in the WNF Education Subcommittee and Western Pacific Region meetings, with board members attending regularly.

ARONAH is a non-profit partner of WNF.

Education sector:

National Education Accreditation Standards:

Background: The current National Education Accreditation Standards were reviewed in 2025. This process began in 2024 where all associations as well as the education sectors in Australia and New Zealand were invited to provide feedback on the standards written in 2020. This process also included a review of the Code of Conduct and the Competency Standards for naturopaths both in Australia and New Zealand. The year has consisted of regular meetings, not only with education members of the ANC, along with South Pacific College of Natural Medicine, but all naturopathic associations in Australia and New Zealand. Namely: ANPA, ANTA, ATMS, CMA, NHAA, and NMHNZ. All organisations were involved to varying degrees,

and all feedback received has been very valuable. These documents are almost finished, with a view of being released in early 2026.

Course Advisory meetings

Background: Educational course advisory meetings allow institutions to consult with the external naturopathic community to gain feedback and input to current degrees offered. ARONAH participates to help prioritise public safety during curriculum changes.

In 2025, ARONAH attended Course Advisory Committee meetings at Torrens University and Southern Cross University but has not been invited to Endeavour's meetings since 2021.

LOBBYING AND MEETINGS

As already mentioned, ARONAH has attended meetings with the ANC, South Pacific College of Natural medicine, all naturopathic associations in Australia and New Zealand, and has attended multiple WNF meetings across the year.

ARONAH has also been part of all stakeholder meetings for the Private Health Insurance review in 2025.

SUSTAINABILITY

ARONAH membership retention data

ARONAH membership has grown by 2% in 2025.

ARONAH has amended its constitution to formally include New Zealand, and we are delighted to welcome our inaugural New Zealand board member. In the coming year, ARONAH anticipates opening membership to New Zealand practitioners, further strengthening our Trans-Tasman collaborations.

Strategic Planning

In early 2026, ARONAH will conduct its third annual strategic planning session. This meeting will establish priorities and create subcommittees aimed at advancing key organisational initiatives throughout the year.

COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC TOWARDS NATUROPATHS AND WESTERN HERBALISTS

Background: ARONAH is an important port of call for members of the public to complain about the treatment they have received from naturopaths and Western herbalists. Complaints generally centre around unprofessional service, missing major health issues, or reactions to treatment, alongside the expense of treatments and testing costs.

In 2025, complaint numbers were much lower than average, being 3 complaints received.

- 2025 calendar year = 3
- 2024 calendar year = 8
- 2023 calendar year = 17 (corrected from 16 as one complaint was in late Dec)
- 2022 calendar year = 3
- 2021 calendar year = 5
- 2020 calendar year = 6
- 2019 calendar year = 6
- 2018 calendar year = 9
- 2017 calendar year = 5
- 2016 (second half of the year) = 3

On behalf of the ARONAH board, we thank all our current members and are looking forward to a productive year in 2026.

Report prepared by
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