

Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine Project

Codifying our knowledge. *It's time.*



Why is this project different in scope than the standard medical textbook?

The Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine textbook is now 70% complete. When we initiated this project, we aimed to produce a limited overview medical text. *FNM* Senior Editors then purposefully expanded the textbook scope from a small (380 text pages) to an intermediate (700 text pgs) to a full codified¹ foundational medical textbook between 2007-2022. Decisions were based on *FNM's* editorial retreats outcomes, needs expressed by the profession, faculty and students in hundreds of meetings and thousands of discussions including the profession's Agency liaisons. *FNM's* multiple Retreat proceedings are key deliverables and costs of the *Project*.

The Naturopathic medicine profession has never had a fully codified international textbook of this scope - a statement on its foundations - since it was founded, and the need is high. We were starting from scratch. During the earlier years of development, we expanded our scope to produce what is needed: a comprehensive, codified and groundbreaking text of unexpected proportion, and realized that our initial projections underestimated the task and timelines before us. Below, are details of precisely what the *Project* has, and continues, to entail.

- Expansion in scope of work: The textbook has involved extensive research on the conceptual and historical foundations of naturopathic medicine and the modern expression of these foundations within the context of rigorous scholarship and modern science.
- Through this research, we have amassed a substantial library of information, derived not only from well-known biomedical databases, but also from databases of philosophy, sociology, psychology, traditional world medicines, public health, complementary and alternative medicine, theoretical biology, and physics.
- Naturopathic medicine experienced 'near death' (200 NDs left in North America) in the late 60's and early 70s, leaving students in the modern era with a huge gap to fill—a near “broken lineage” of knowledge transmission. There were few specifically naturopathic books and fewer ND journal articles. *FNM* has been not only writing, codifying, synthesizing and editing - it has been finding, amassing, interviewing, transcribing and organizing this lost body of knowledge, as the basis for developing the text. This work goes far beyond (though includes) peer reviewed scientific databases. This “knowledge” then has had to be “codified” - a unique and resource intensive process.
- The work of transferring the extensive clinical experience from the minds of the profession's senior experts into articulated information that can be applied to practice, requires the uncommon, lengthy, and complex process of codification. Although content expansion is common to the production of seminal medical textbooks, codification is not, and is a key element now noted as absent from existing, medical textbooks.
- Content development involves close collaboration with an international team of more than 300 authors in 11 countries. The detailed editorial process is time consuming, but necessary to ensure there is academic rigor and profession-wide consensus on certain topics.
- The *Project* has included the production of many deliverables in addition to the textbook. Although these deliverables also are integral components of the textbook, they also are standalone deliverables used for other educational purposes throughout the naturopathic community (see other publications for a list of goals and deliverables achieved).
- Some textbook sections have had to be re-commissioned, due to illness or death within editorial or author teams. Other sections have been delayed, due to extended illness within editor or author teams.
- A textbook of this scope, breadth, and depth is the first in the history of the naturopathic profession. Publication schedule for manuscript completion of this 2000-page manuscript is now 24 months, depending on and commencing with receiving full funding of the remaining work.

¹. Codify: to synthesize and/or import knowledge into the boundaries or framework of a discipline. The framework is defined by its scope of practice and the theory of the discipline.