



# Standard

## Billing and Fees

### **Purpose:**

To assist members in creating and maintaining fair and ethical fee and billing practices. Members are accountable for any fee, billing or account that uses their name and/or registration number. Naturopaths must be aware of how their names and registration numbers are being used.

### **Informed Consent:**

Prior to providing care, the member and/or clinic staff ensures that patients (guardians) are given clear information about all fees and that they understand this information.

Fee schedules must be posted and visible in the practice and must outline the following:

- The fees for all visits or services; this includes: any relevant financial policies and payment expectations including; information on fees and the fee schedule specific to the patient circumstances, including all fees that might apply to the patient; the basis upon which a bill for services is calculated; and the acceptable methods of payment;
- Fees and policies regarding missed, late and/or cancelled appointments. Patients may be charged for a missed appointment time or for failing to cancel an appointment without sufficient notice, provided the naturopathic doctor has an explicit policy on charging for missed appointments and has communicated the policy clearly to all patients in advance of providing services;
- Patients are informed of changes to clinic fee policies and/or fee increases;
- Ensures that any departure from an established or documented fee is consented to by the patient and documented in the patient record.

### **Best Practices:**

The Member ensures that the fees charged:

- are not excessive in relation to the services proposed;
- supplements and devices are only marked-up to current Manufacture Suggested Retail Pricing (MSRP) provided by the manufactures and/or reasonable professional retail and dispensary protocols
- are an accurate reflection of the services provided to each patient.

## Specimen, Testing and Laboratory Fees:

The Member may:

For Specimen, testing, and laboratory fees are only marked-up with current MSRP's provided by the manufactures and or reasonable professional retail protocols.

- charge a reasonable fee for collecting non-blood specimens to be sent for laboratory testing, and itemize it on the invoice as “collection of specimen”
- charge the patient for the cost of the test and any associated fee(s) (e.g. requisition/collection fees from the medical laboratory) incurred by the Member.
- charge a reasonable fee for the analysis of laboratory test results, extensive work outside of an appointment, or emails if it is done outside of a patient appointment

## Discounts:

Prior to delivering services, the member may enter into agreements with patients to provide Naturopathic services at a different rate or pro-bono (free). Such agreements must not violate the ethical principles of the Association in that the same level of care must be provided to all patients regardless of the fee charged. Information regarding the agreed rate should be available on patient records/receipts.

**Discounts are provided on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Members and must not be advertised or promoted.**

## Prohibited Billing:

Alternative billing practices do not meet the standard of care for client specific treatment. Fee bundling that results in discounts may be advertised and promoted in other jurisdictions but they are not supported by the Manitoba Naturopathic Association and may be in contravention of private health insurance coverage plans and may lead to audits by third party insurers.

Examples:

- Package deals/Block Fees that include a discount (5<sup>th</sup> visit free for example)
- Time limited pricing
- Discounts/Promotions that undercut the profession
- Discounts for referrals
- Reduction in fees for prompt payment of services

## **Audit Practices:**

It is recommended that clinic/practice audits regarding invoices and billing practices occur at periodic intervals to ensure:

- the accuracy of invoices;
- an understanding of the fees that are being charged for their services;
- an understanding of how their registration or billing number is being used; and
- when abnormalities are discovered, reasonable steps are taken to remedy the situation.

## **Receipts:**

Receipts must be issued for all payments. If a replacement receipt is issued it is clearly marked "COPY". Receipts are clearly itemized with the following information:

- Name of treating member
- Clinic name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Member's registration number
- Patient's name
- Date of service
- Services billed
- Fees for supplements
- Injectable substances
- Laboratory tests/devices/special testing
- Payments received; timely notice of balance owing.

Fees for naturopathic consultation are separated from all other fees. Fees for supplements, injectable substances, laboratory tests, devices, special testing, etc., are individually listed, either on the same or another receipt. The purchase and redemption of vouchers or gift certificates are clearly documented.

## **Related Standards and Resources:**

*MNA Informed Consent Standard*

*MNA Record Keeping Standard*

This Standard was approved by the Manitoba Naturopathic Association Board of Directors April 22,, 2021.