



## Complementary and Alternative Medicine

**Standards of Practice** of the Yukon Medical Council (“the Council”) are the minimum standards of professional behavior and ethical conduct expected of all physicians registered in the Yukon. Standards of Practice will be referenced in the management of complaints and in discipline

- (1) In this standard, Complementary and Alternative Medicine (hereafter referred to as “CAM”) means a group of diverse medical and healthcare systems, practices, and products that are not presently considered to be part of conventional medicine.
  - (a) While some scientific evidence exists regarding some CAM therapies, for most there are key questions that are yet to be answered through well-designed scientific studies. These questions include whether these therapies are safe and whether they are effective for the diseases or medical conditions for which they are used.
  - (b) The list of what is considered to be CAM changes continually, as those therapies that are proven to be safe and effective become adopted into conventional healthcare and as new approaches to healthcare emerge.
- (2) A physician must not provide a CAM therapy to a patient until the physician has been approved by the Council to provide such therapy. A physician who performs acupuncture on patients must provide satisfactory evidence of training and be approved by the Council.
- (3) Application for approval to provide CAM therapy must provide information about the therapy and the physician’s training and experience with the therapy, acceptable to the Council.
- (4) Where it is uncertain whether the use of nutritional supplements, vitamins, pharmaceuticals or natural health products approved by Health Canada, or physical therapies are CAM therapies, those which are supported by scientific studies published in orthodox medical literature do not require application for approval from the Registrar.
- (5) Notwithstanding subsection (2), a physician who does not hold approval to administer a CAM therapy may provide the CAM therapy without approval from the Council to a patient who suffers from a fatal, incurable disease.
- (6) A physician who provides a CAM therapy to a patient must ensure that the following steps have been fulfilled:
  - (a) an orthodox medical evaluation of the patient, which must include the taking of an appropriate history, conducting an appropriate physical examination and conducting the appropriate diagnostic tests or investigations, as are relevant to the patient’s complaint, presenting condition and history;
  - (b) an orthodox medical diagnosis has been established;
  - (c) orthodox medical treatment options have been discussed with the patient;
  - (d) the unproven status, the safety and the potential toxicity of the CAM therapy have been discussed with the patient;
  - (e) the physician’s professional experience with the use of the CAM therapy and conventional therapy has been declared to the patient; and

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**Terms used in the Standards of Practice:**

- *Physician* means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered under the Medical Profession Act.
- *Must* refers to a mandatory requirement.
- *May* means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- *Patient* includes, where applicable, the patient’s legal guardian or substitute decision maker.

- (f) the number of treatments, time frame and costs to the patient for the CAM therapy are discussed with the patient.
- (7) A physician must keep a patient record that documents completion of the steps in subsection (6).
- (8) A physician conducting clinical research into the use of a CAM therapy must have approval for the research from an approved ethics review board.

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