

INTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

Intent

To advise Registrants who incorporate the controlled act of performing internal examinations in their naturopathic practice of the requirements to perform the procedure safely, ethically and competently.

Definitions

Internal Examinations: The authorized acts of:

- a. putting an instrument, hand or finger beyond the labia majora but not beyond the cervix, and
- b. putting an instrument, hand or finger beyond the anal verge but not beyond the rectal-sigmoidal junction.

STANDARD 1

The Registrant who performs internal examinations within the context of their naturopathic practice has acquired and maintains the knowledge, skill and judgment necessary to perform the procedure safely, ethically, and competently.

A Registrant demonstrates the standard by:

- maintaining competency for performing the procedure by engaging in continuing education and/or incorporating internal examinations as a regular part of their practice, and
- ensuring that they are appropriately trained and competent in relevant emergency procedures and have appropriate risk management processes in place to manage any adverse outcomes or complications resulting from the performance of the procedure.

STANDARD 2

The Registrant minimizes the risk to the patient, self and others that are associated with the performance of internal examinations, before, during and after the procedure.

A Registrant demonstrates the standard by:

- performing an internal examination within the context of a naturopathic doctor-patient relationship,
- considering the patient's condition, the risks and benefits and any other relevant circumstances specific to the patient before performing an internal examination,
- obtaining and documenting informed consent,
- offering to have a second person present during the procedure,
- using appropriate draping techniques to maintain patient's privacy and comfort,
- applying current evidence-based infection control protocols to minimize risk factors for infection or contamination when performing an internal examination,
- performing an internal examination only when clinically indicated, for the purposes of:
 - examining a patient in the course of an assessment,
 - formulating a naturopathic diagnosis,
 - treating the patient with naturopathic treatments,
 - taking or collecting a specimen.
- ensuring documentation in the patient record in accordance with the *Standard of Practice: Record Keeping*.

STANDARD 3

The Registrant ensures that all equipment and supplies used for internal examinations are stored and maintained appropriately.

A Registrant demonstrates the standard by:

- storing and maintaining equipment and supplies according to manufacturers' specifications,
- using only single use disposable vaginal specula, and

- ensuring appropriate handling and disposing of biomedical waste.