

**College of Naturopathic Medicine  
Health Coach: Scope of Practice Guidelines**

This document provides guidance on the Scope of Practice to College of Naturopathic Medicine Health Coach diploma course students and graduates and helps to ensure that they take responsibility to confirm and act within this defined Scope of Practice.

This guidance helps to ensure that our students and graduates conduct their work in any capacity as a Health Coach within appropriate professional boundaries - including conducting a one-on-one consultation, a group session, holding a seminar or publishing information - by empowering the client to develop and achieve self-determined goals related to their health and wellbeing.

OUT OF SCOPE	WITHIN SCOPE
<p><b>Diagnosing a health condition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the client to fully understand their own health and the root causes of any health condition(s) diagnosed by a qualified health professional.</li> <li>- Empowering the client to become an expert in their own health and any diagnosed health condition(s), and in them developing self-management strategies for making sustainable, healthy lifestyle behaviour changes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Treating a health condition or claiming to cure a health condition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Setting health and wellness goals and behavioural change together with the client, and supporting the client to achieve these – based on the clients’ own goals, and consistent with treatment plans as prescribed by individual clients’ professional healthcare providers.</li> <li>- Helping the client to self-manage their symptoms through healthy lifestyle.</li> <li>- Co-creating a health improvement plan as partners and facilitators with the client.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Giving detailed dietary advice or writing detailed meal-plans</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assist the client use their personal insight and resources in setting goals and action steps towards healthy lifestyle changes. For example, by suggesting basic guidance on nutrition and lifestyle, in-line with the level and content taught on the course, such as ways to reduce the intake of refined sugars.</li> <li>- Offering supporting resources from recognised authorities such as current government and public health guidelines and peer-reviewed sources.</li> <li>- Actively seek collaborations with other health professionals and referring to such health professionals where relevant</li> </ul>

OUT OF SCOPE	WITHIN SCOPE
<b>Prescribing therapeutic protocols/treatments or nutritional supplements such as vitamins, minerals, herbs or other nutraceuticals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoid giving specific personal health advice, but instead offer a client direction to recognised, robust evidence-based and peer reviewed authorities, so that the client can draw their own conclusions, gain confidence and a sense of empowerment.</li> </ul>
<b>Ordering or interpreting diagnostic tests such as blood, urine or saliva tests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing appropriate educational resources related to the client's health challenge(s), including research on diagnostic testing related to their health condition(s).</li> <li>- Partnering with other health professionals qualified in diagnostic testing, where relevant</li> </ul>

## Doing no harm

In common with all health professionals, Health Coaches must follow a 'do no harm' mandate by refraining from or carrying out any actions that would harm clients. These actions include:

- assessing symptoms
- diagnosing conditions
- interpreting laboratory results
- giving specific dietary advice
- removing food groups
- prescribing treatments or therapeutic interventions (including nutritional)
- making claims to prevent or cure any condition

or from engaging in any other activities that could ultimately:

- harm a client
- lead to a legal lawsuit
- invalidate your professional indemnity insurance cover
- bring the Health Coaching profession into disrepute

The boundaries of this Scope of Practice may include, but is not limited to:

- coaching an individual, or a group
- writing a blog or articles
- holding or participating in webinars, speaking and educational events
- communicating in online forums, meetings with colleagues, peers HCPs

The exception being where a coach holds an active nationally recognised professional qualification and insurance in another profession (for example as a nutritional therapist, pharmacist, doctor, nurse) in which case they may provide expert guidance related to that topic, but must act within the Scope of Practice of that, or those profession(s). In such a case, it is the health coach's responsibility to confirm in writing the **Scope of Practice** for any and each service agreed with a client.

## Individual Indemnity Insurance

Discounts on insurance are available through professional associations such as the ANP. Before working on case studies students must ensure they have their own individual indemnity insurance.

While CNM's insurance covers only the training and supervision given to the students in the event there is a claim made against the school, a client does have the option to take legal action against an individual student, so for this reason students must be covered for this eventuality.

Discounts on indemnity insurance policies are available through professional associations such as the ANP. Students pay at a reduced rate that only insures you for carrying out case studies under supervision. Once qualified you will need to upgrade your insurance cover as a fully qualified Health Coach within the country in which you intend to work.

Students are responsible for following the legal requirements and working guidelines of the country / state in which they practice / work within. This includes maintaining indemnity insurance cover.

Students must advise clients they are a student under supervision and not yet fully qualified, and must keep a written record of this disclosure. Students cannot do anything beyond the scope that they have been taught at the time of undertaking the case study, and cannot charge the same fees as a qualified professional.

## Data Protection Policy

CNM complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR/DPA2018) that controls how personal information is used by organisations, businesses or government.

See CNM's Privacy Policy <https://www.naturopathy-uk.com/privacy-policy/>

For a more detailed explanation of complying with each of the data protection principles see <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

## Responsibilities to Clients & Record Keeping

All members of the CNM teaching and clinic teams, and students have a responsibility to:

- Uphold a duty of care to all clients.
- Ensure that client confidentiality is upheld at all times.
- Ensure complete clinical records of all clients treated in CNM clinic or treated in other clinical placements (e.g., case studies) are accurate, comprehensive and stored securely in accordance with Data Protection Regulations.
- Ensure records are kept for a minimum of seven years, or in the case of a minor - seven years after they reach the age of 18 years.
- Ensure their working conditions are suitable for the practice of their therapy.

- Ensure they are physically, medically and mentally fit to practice.
- Ensure that all suggestions are fully explained to the client and that the client has understood them.
- Respect a client's right to refuse or ignore suggestions given.
- Ensure that proper authority is obtained for clients under the age of consent and that consent is given by a legally appropriate and competent person, and confirmed in writing with a date and signature.
- Ensure clients are not financially, sexually or emotionally exploited.
- Ensure knowledge is not acquired from clients for any personal gain.
- Ensure the clinic appointment confirmation email sent to clients prior to their clinic consultation, states that there may be a small number of student or other observers present at their consultation.

## Safeguarding of Adults

CNM is committed to Safeguarding Adults by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps adults safe, in line with current legislation.

CNM has created a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults through its commitment to best safeguarding practice by upholding the rights of all adults to live a life free from harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect, regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

All reports of concern about the safety and welfare of an adult must be reported promptly to the Director of Studies/ Online Tutor who will report the known information to the Managing Director at head office. The Managing Director will take appropriate action in line with the Safeguarding of Adults legislation.

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**Signed Agreement** *Please sign and date to confirm you have read and understood the Scope of Practice. For any queries, please contact the [coursedirector@thehealthcoach.com](mailto:coursedirector@thehealthcoach.com)*

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_