

Dr Eliot W. Edwards, ND, FABNO

Naturopathic Cancer Specialist

Wholistic and Integrative care.



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March 24, 2021

SB772, Support Fair Pay for Naturopathic Doctors (NDs)

Dear Senate Committee on Health Care:

My name is Dr. Eliot Edwards. I am a Naturopathic Physician and a Fellow of the American Board of Naturopathic Oncology (FABNO). My practice is focused on integrative oncology care, where I work collaboratively with my medical oncologist colleagues (MDs/DOs) to provide support for patients fighting cancer.

I would like to share my experience working in Oregon as a licensed ND delivering quality healthcare in my community, the barriers I face in delivering this care and ask you to please support SB772. My patients rely on my care to help make their cancer treatments tolerable – minimizing common side effects and maintaining their quality of life, during otherwise incredibly challenging treatments.

One challenge for many patients, however, is the limited coverage many insurance policies provide for naturopathic physicians. Some of these plans limit reimbursement, specifically for naturopathic physicians, despite NDs being fully licensed and recognized physicians in the state of Oregon. This makes it more difficult for doctors like me to stay in practice and deliver this essential care for patients fighting cancer. In turn, it limits access to healthcare for many individuals and families when naturopathic doctors are forced to opt out of accepting these insurances who reimburse NDs significantly less than other doctors and mid-level providers (NPs, PAs). And for those of us who have been able to stay in practice, we do so at a great economic disadvantage to our peers, making it difficult to repay student loans, buy a house, raise a family and give back to the community.

My wife, daughter and I moved back to Oregon in 2017. My wife is also a naturopathic physician. We moved back here from Illinois largely because naturopathic physicians are fully licensed and highly integrated into the medical system in this state. Despite that recognition, discrimination in the form of poor reimbursement continues even here in Oregon through unfair practices by the insurance companies. Please help us change this issue.

I am asking you to vote yes on SB772 and support fair pay for Naturopathic Doctors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eliot W. Edwards, ND, FABNO". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eliot W. Edwards, ND, FABNO