

NEWS BRIEFS

OAND

Oregon Legislature Passes Naturopathic Formulary Bill

Oregon lawmakers passed Senate Bill 327, which expands the prescribing authority for that state's licensed NDs.

According to the Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians (OAND), in addition to the list of naturally derived drugs on the naturopathic formulary, Senate Bill 327 will permit NDs to prescribe common primary care pharmaceuticals that are synthetically derived.

Dr. David J. Schleich, president of NCNM in Portland, applauded the bill's passage.

"Oregon's naturopathic physicians, educated and clinically trained as primary care physicians, will soon be in a position in which they can put their full scope of practice to use at a time when the demand for low-cost, preventive health care is highest."

To this point, the approximately 650 NDs practicing in Oregon have been limited in their prescribing authority by a 1950s statute that stipulated that NDs could only prescribe naturally derived substances, which precluded a few commonly used drugs, now considered "standard of care" in primary care settings. Bill 327 enables the Oregon Board of Naturopathic Examiners (OBNE), through its Formulary Council, to determine the full formulary of medications Oregon NDs can prescribe based on naturopathic principles, public need and evidence-based clinical reasoning. The Formulary Council consists of two pharma-

cists, a pharmacologist, a pharmacognosist, a medical doctor and two NDs.

Rick Marinelli, ND and OBNE chair, said, "The present formulary is very large. Although it includes all major drug therapy categories, some important, safe, low-cost synthetic drugs aren't included."

He added that the new law will allow the formulary to include common synthetic prescription drugs that NDs have been trained in, including diuretics and high blood pressure medications, among others.

The law is slated to go into effect in January 2010.