

**Naturopathic Medicine Doctoral Program
School of Health Sciences
Universidad del Turabo
Gurabo, Puerto Rico**



**UNIVERSIDAD DEL TURABO
NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE DOCTORAL PROGRAM
Formal Institutional Response (FRI) in Response to the
CNME Evaluation Team Report**

April 24, 2015

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INTRODUCTION

Universidad del Turabo NMDP appreciates the opportunity given by the CNME to present a Formal Institutional Response (FIR) to the site visit team report. The UT NMDP FIR focuses mostly on the team's recommendations and areas of interest as presented in the Evaluation Team Report document. Also some updates recently made to our Program are included for information purposes. Both are clearly indicated under each standard either as **NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest** or **NMDP Updates**. A need to correct any specific information is included **in blue** and specified as **Correction**.

STANDARD I: MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

None

NMDP Updates

Information in the CNME site visit team report	Page	UT NMDP FIR
In its <i>Self-study Report</i> the NMDP identified a weakness in providing students with practice in a patient-focused, evidence-based, interdisciplinary (emphasis added) healthcare service model. The Evaluation Team observed that corrective action in being taken this area.	8	An interdisciplinary healthcare model is now in place, with collaborations with the Interdisciplinary Institute of the Universidad del Turabo, the School of Natural Sciences and Technology and the Psychology program. Also through the new Health Science Research Committee, students are engaged, not only at the clinical level with clinicians such as MDs, DCs and NDs, but also with PhDs in Microbiology, Mycology, and Analytical Chemistry.

Correction

None

STANDARD II: ORGANIZATION, GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

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The Evaluation Team recommends that the NMDP limit the teaching/clinical instruction loads of the Program Director and Clinical Coordinator to a reasonable minimum so that they have adequate time for administrative duties. (Std.II.B.3)	10	The teaching/clinical instruction loads for both the Program Director and the Clinical Coordinator have been adjusted for the term beginning May 2015.

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

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The Board conducts its major business through its four standing committees (Finance, Audit, Academic and Student Affairs, and Governance), who report activities, recommendations, and actions to the Board as a whole.

STANDARD III: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

None

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

None

STANDARD IV: PROGRAM FACULTY

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

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The Evaluation Team recommends that the NMDP expeditiously develop an evaluation schedule and process for conducting formal faculty evaluations, and that the evaluation process be implemented in a timely manner.	12	An evaluation schedule is in place and it's conducted annually at the Institutional level. The School of Health Sciences and the NMDP will focus on the development and implementation of a feedback mechanism. This mechanism will

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(Std.IV.C.2)		guarantee that the Program Director receives the evaluation results in a timely manner. Also it will provide a schedule with timelines so that faculty receives their evaluations and have feedback sessions programmed to discuss the results and recommendations.
The program should inform faculty of the financial resources available for faculty development and how to apply for funding. (Std.IV.D.1)	13	The Program has already taken measures in the process of planning for the 2015-2016 budget period to include and effectively communicate the availability of financial resources for faculty professional development activities.

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

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Faculty Sufficiency

The program has significant logistical challenges regarding faculty sufficiency. While there are only 9 - practicing NDs in Puerto Rico as of March 2015, the program has historically been able to recruit a total of five NDs from the US mainland and Canada.

STANDARD V: STUDENT SERVICES

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

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The relevant department must verify that the outstanding conditions are met and that appropriate documentation is maintained in student files. (Std.V.B.5)	18	The NMDP admissions committee will update student's records and make sure this year admission process include the verification of all students/candidates documents.

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

Page 14

General Provisions

There is clear evidence that students have a valued voice with respect to the NMDP. Their input is gathered through regular formal and informal group meetings. In addition if they wish, students may report concerns regarding the clinical experience through a common student email account.

STANDARD VI: PROGRAM OF STUDY

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

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<p>The Evaluation Team recommends that the NMDP ensure that all student interns have opportunities to provide the full range of naturopathic treatment modalities in a balanced manner in the context of their clinical training. (Std.VI.C.2, VI.C.4b & c)</p> <p>The Evaluation Team had a more general concern about the patient charts they observed, in that the charts: (i) lacked evidence of pertinent physical examination findings, (ii) lacked differential diagnoses, and (iii) lacked incorporation of naturopathic principles in the clinical decision-making process.</p>	21	<p>For each patient case during individual, as well as group discussions, variable options within the scope of naturopathic treatment modalities are required to be researched and discussed; promoting evidence based clinical decision support. The focus on patient education, discussions on methods of inspiring rational hope and encouraging self-responsibility for health, is a common practice for patient management in our clinic. Nonetheless, appropriate and more thorough documentation on patient education interventions, assessment and different treatment recommendations, even if refused by the patient for any reason, needs to be more closely monitored by clinic supervising faculty.</p> <p>To avoid this situation from recurring random patient record audits must be performed each term by the clinical coordinator and/or clinical faculty committee. Documentation deficiencies as well as findings concerning pertinent PE findings, differential diagnosis and incorporation of naturopathic principles in the clinical reasoning and treatment plan formulation will be reported during clinical faculty meetings for the discussion of correcting methods. This</p>

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		<p>will assure that standards are being uniformly maintained at all times.</p> <p>The creation and establishment of systematic reviews focused on enforcing practice guidelines as well as patient outcomes centered in maximizing value for patients are currently under development.</p> <p>Systematic procedures to facilitate patient treatment plan continuity when changes in student/supervisor result are currently under development.</p> <p>Even though Clinic Protocol documents will be ready for implementation on August 2015. Clinic faculty is currently more rigorous on enforcing first visit complete physical examinations, proper assessment documentation as well as the documentation of naturopathic principles application in the development of treatment plans.</p>
<p>Currently students have insufficient opportunities to perform certain clinical examinations (gynecological and digital rectal examinations) during their training.</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>Some DREs have been performed in clinic before and after the site visit but not in sufficient numbers to provide experience for all students.</p> <p>In order to increase exposure we are planning a Men's health fair series during the month of June 2015 (Men's health/Cancer Awareness Month). Students will prepare 15 min educational talks around male health issues concentrating on prostate cancer awareness and prevention. DRE screenings will be available free of charge.</p> <p>The collaboration agreement between our NMDP and a local OB/GYN, Dr. Orlando Campoamor, is currently under development. Our collaboration proposal has already been accepted. Dr. Campoamor has agreed to receive</p>

Information in the CNME site visit team report	Page	UT NMDP FIR
		students in his private practice for clinical and physical diagnostic training. Meeting to discuss details for official MOU is scheduled for April 29th, 2015.
In some instances, two student interns share the primary role in providing treatments and are both granted credit for this; the program must make sure that credit for primary contacts reflects primary responsibility for the patient. (Std.VI.5d)	21	Ever since the CNME site visit this matter has been adjusted and only one primary level student is assigned and accredited a patient contact.
It appears that the way the NMDP calculates clinical hours is inconsistent with the CNME clinical education requirements. (Std.VI.C.5a, b, d & e)	22	<p>The implementation of a supplementary hundred hour/6 week summer shift will satisfy this standard and resolve the problem of our current curriculum not providing a summer shift necessary for providing continuity in patient care during summer season.</p> <p>This summer the rotation will run from June 8th to July 17th. The official curriculum change will be reflected by summer 2016.</p>

NMDP Updates

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The Evaluation Team **suggests** that the NMDP consider organizing either women’s and men’s wellness clinics, or hire models to provide students with needed practice in these areas.

Update

Collaborations with Hospitals are being made through a research and service model. The NMDP has worked to establish collaborations with Hospitals such as HIMA San Pablo in Caguas. Some of the NMDP faculty is actively serving in hospital based settings. For example Dr. Angel Rivera is a faculty member of Hospital Auxilio Mutuo in San Juan, Puerto Rico. An MOU is in place with Universidad de Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus for research purposes and collaborations with the Intensive Care Unit. MOU representatives are the ICU Director Dr. Pablo Rodríguez MD, and Dr. Walter Silva who’s the Vice-Chancellor of the Medical Sciences Campus.

Although collaborations are solid and functional, as more ND students are recruited, new

collaborations will be established with other specialized areas (e.g. OB/GYN, ICU, ER).

Correction

Page 23

Although based on the Puerto Rican law regulations NDs are not allowed to perform papanicolau smears, the UT NMDP has identified a Clinic where the students will be able to observe and practice this procedure under the supervision of a Gynecologist. This clinic will provide students the experience and practice of pap smears and vaginal exams. Currently, the program does not have the capacity to compound teas or tinctures although it has taken the first steps toward being able to do so.

STANDARD VII: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

None

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

None

STANDARD VIII: CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

At this time the NMDP offers no continuing medical education.

STANDARD IX: LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

None

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

None

STANDARD X: RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

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<p>The SHS should ensure the establishment of a permanent research structure that supports ND program faculty and students in developing research literacy and an understanding of methodology, and provides opportunities to engage in research. (Std.X.A.2)</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>The NMDP Research and Scholarship Committee have been merged with the School Health Science Research Committee. There is now an active research strategic interdisciplinary plan that integrates all of the SHS programs and an Inter-School’s Strategic Research Plan that integrates other Schools like Natural Science and Technology, Engineering, the Psychology Program, and the School of Design and Architecture.</p> <p>This strategic plan will foster student mentorships with different specialties; Speech-Language Pathology, Nursing, Veterinary Medicine, and Nutrition.</p> <p>Currently there are two proposals being prepared to be submitted to the Puerto Rico Energy Center (PREC) for NMDP students mentoring undergraduates’ students in Integrative Medicine in Cancer and Integrative treatments in Hypertension with English Hawthorn.</p> <p>The NMDP has a garden located on-campus with 27 different species. The NMDP has established collaboration with the School of Natural Sciences and Technology to run a Laboratory in Naturopathic Medicine for the development of tinctures and oils to be used in the clinical setting.</p> <p>There is one integrative proposal that was sent in February 2014 to the AstraZeneca Cardiovascular Foundation for teaching about naturopathy, natural herbs, and supplements to students, teachers, and the general population.</p> <p>Core research courses in the NMDP will</p>

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		be redirected to provide interdisciplinary topics for maximal student benefit and to foster research collaborations with other institutions.

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

None

STANDARD XI: PHYSICAL RESOURCES

NMDP Response to Recommendations and Areas of Interest

None

NMDP Updates

None

Correction

None