

Why is Patient Experience Important?

- “Patient experience” refers to what happens to people when they are interacting with the health care system and trying to have their needs met.
- Patients satisfied with their experiences are more compliant, have better follow-up, have better disease outcomes, and help insurers meet benchmarks for Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Provider and Systems (CAHPS) accreditation.¹

Examples of Patient Experience Indicators:

- Does the patient feel listened to?
- Does he or she understand explanations about his or her health issues and important instructions about recommended care?
- Does the patient have the ability to get timely information in response to questions about his or her health concerns?

What can a patient expect from a visit with a naturopathic doctor?

Naturopathic practice is distinguished by treatments individualized to a patient’s physical condition and environmental circumstances, requiring combination therapies adjusted over time as guided by patient response. In addition to conventional treatments, modalities most often used in naturopathic practice include clinical nutrition and dietary revision, counseling for lifestyle modification (such as smoking cessation and increased exercise, botanical medicine), homeopathy, physical medicine, and mind-body therapies.²

Naturopathic Doctors Offer Comprehensive Care

“I think one difference is, my medical doctor seems to want to manage symptoms. And the [ND] wants to get kind of to the bottom of things, take all the layers off to get to and address the root issue.”

(PLoS 2012)

Patients get more time with their naturopathic doctor.

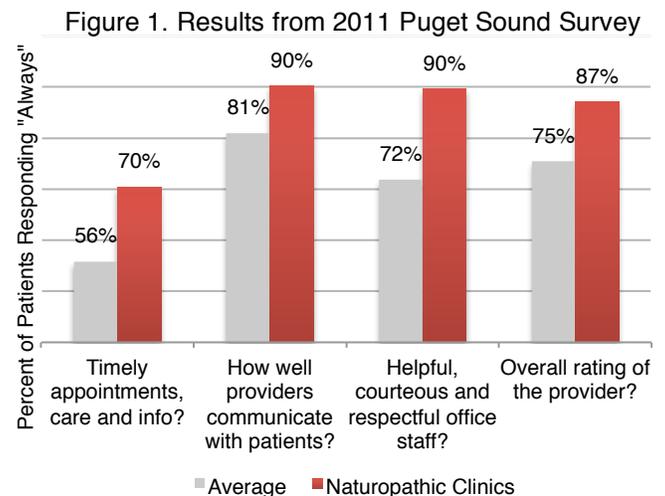
Better patient outcomes are generally associated with longer consultation times.³

- The average ND visit is 40 minutes, while the average MD visit is 15-17 minutes.⁵
- Currently, 75% of all healthcare expenditures are spent on the nearly 50% of all Americans living with at least one chronic condition. For chronic cases with no easy fix, time matters.⁴

Research increasingly shows that patients are more satisfied with NDs.

Evidence shows that the quality of the physician-patient interaction influences treatment outcomes.¹

- Bastyr Center for Natural Health, a health clinic affiliated with an accredited naturopathic medical university, **ranked #1** of 156 health clinics in an independent Puget Sound survey on patient experience.¹
- The Bastyr Center ranked #1 in the categories of “How Well Providers Communicate with Patients” and “Getting Timely Appointments, Care and Information.”
- Naturopathic clinics outperformed conventional clinics in each survey category (Figure 1).



¹ *Your Voice Matters: Patient Experience with Primary Care Providers in the Puget Sound Region*. Seattle, WA: Puget Sound Health Alliance, 2012.

² Oberg, Erica B., et al. "Patient-Reported Experiences with First-Time Naturopathic Care for Type 2 Diabetes." *PLoS one* 7.11 (2012): e48549.

³ Busato, André, and Beat Künzi. "Differences in the quality of interpersonal care in complementary and conventional medicine." *BMC complementary and alternative medicine* 10.1 (2010): 63.

⁴ *Chronic Disease in California: Facts and Figures*. Oakland, CA: California Healthcare Foundation, 2006.

⁵ JABFP Nov-Dec 2002, Vol 15, No.6 pg 467