

NHMRC Natural Therapies Working Committee (s39 Working Committee)

Terms of Reference

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is establishing a Natural Therapies Working Committee (the Committee) to oversee evidence evaluations on the clinical effectiveness of 16 natural therapies excluded from health insurance on 1 April 2019 (excluded natural therapies). These therapies are Alexander technique, aromatherapy, Bowen therapy, Buteyko, Feldenkrais, western herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, kinesiology, naturopathy, Pilates, reflexology, Rolfing, shiatsu, tai chi, and yoga.

The evidence evaluations will update the evidence underpinning the *2015 Review of the Australian Government Rebate on Private Health Insurance for Natural Therapies* (2015 Review) and support the Australian Government Chief Medical Officer to provide advice to Government on whether any of the excluded therapies should be re-included as eligible for private health insurance rebates.

The role of the Committee is to oversee the evidence evaluations commissioned by NHMRC by advising on:

- their research protocol including;
 - the scope, clinical questions and methods to identify and evaluate relevant studies
 - appropriate inclusion and exclusion criteria
- evidence provided by the Department of Health's Natural Therapies Expert Advisory Panel, including its eligibility and how to incorporate this into the evidence evaluations
- the draft and final evidence evaluation reports provided by the contractors for each of the 16 natural therapies
- the evidence statements in the above reports
- any other matter requested by the NHMRC Chief Executive Officer on this project.

The evaluations will be done in two tranches:

1. Naturopathy, western herbalism, yoga, tai chi, Pilates and shiatsu.
2. Alexander technique, aromatherapy, Bowen therapy, Buteyko, Feldenkrais, homeopathy, iridology, kinesiology, reflexology and Rolfing.

The Committee will be effective for the period 1 August 2019 to 31 August 2020, with a possibility of extension, and will report to the Chief Executive Officer of NHMRC.