



AANP Member Spotlight: Karissa Walton, NMD



1. What started your pathway in naturopathic medicine?

My path to naturopathic medicine started with caring for my mother after she was diagnosed with Stage IV colon cancer. In searching for treatment options, we discovered naturopathic medicine which significantly improved her quality of life and longevity. My mother unfortunately ended up losing her battle with cancer, but naturopathic medicine gave her the hope and health that no other field in medicine could offer. After her passing, I decided to shift gears from applying for allopathic medical school to applying for naturopathic medical school so that I could contribute to changing the face of healthcare today.

2. What do you like most about being a naturopathic doctor and what are some of your challenges?

What I LOVE about being a naturopathic doctor is helping patients find the answers that they have desperately been searching for. I love connecting patients with the optimal, personalized healthcare they deserve. I especially love being able to offer such a high level of care in the comfort of their own homes. Although I have both a mobile clinic and office now, house calls will always be my favorite. I love getting to know the patient and family in their own space. It gives

me a much deeper insight about their health status so I can treat them more effectively. Patients are also much more willing to make changes when you can literally walk into their kitchen and/or medicine cabinet and guide them.

My greatest challenge as a naturopathic doctor is knowing what a patient needs but not being able to move forward due to financial and/or insurance restrictions. The lack of coverage by insurance companies and even some health sharing programs for naturopathic medicine is appalling. Out-of-pocket costs continue to rise and are sometimes unaffordable for patients. Our field has so much to offer yet it is often suppressed by the lack of healthcare funding that is available for patients. In the same vein, my second greatest challenge is the business side. The business side is far more difficult than medicine in my opinion and will make or break a practice, no matter how good of a provider you are.

3. What makes your membership with AANP valuable as a naturopathic doctor?

The AANP is leading the charge for helping naturopathic doctors change the face of healthcare today. I am happy to be part of an organization that is actively working to improve patient access to naturopathic medicine through advancements in legislation and education.

Website: <https://www.themobilehealthdoc.com/>