



Cima Pillsbury, ND, LAc

What started your pathway in naturopathic medicine?

I grew up in a family that valued holistic medicine and used homeopathy, supplements, and botanicals alongside conventional care. After graduating from college I needed to establish care with a new health care provider, and my mother encouraged me to see a Naturopathic Doctor. At the time, I was working as a financial consultant and asking myself, “If I

could do anything, what would I do?”

Meeting my naturopathic doctor was a pivotal moment. The visit resonated deeply with me, and I knew almost immediately that this was the path I wanted to pursue. That experience helped crystallize my decision to transition into naturopathic medicine.

What skills or experiences have been most valuable in your professional growth - and what advice would you give to early-career doctors?

Early in my career, I intentionally sought out other providers for consultation and collaboration. Many of those relationships evolved into lasting professional connections that continue to enrich my practice today. I also enjoy research and the investigative process required to identify and treat root causes of illness.

For early-career doctors, I would strongly encourage networking and mentorship. Don't hesitate to reach out to colleagues, ask questions, and learn from those around you—collaboration is one of our profession's greatest strengths.

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



What I enjoy most is working with patients to redefine what wellness means for them. As naturopathic doctors, we ask a lot of questions and give patients the time and space to tell their stories. Someone once shared that John Bastyr commonly said, *“If you listen to the patient, they will often tell you what they need.”* I found this to be true.

I value that we get to know our patients as whole people and that we have such a diverse toolbox to support them on their health journeys. One of the ongoing challenges, however, is being a small business owner—particularly having started practices in Alaska, Maine, and now Massachusetts. Each move has brought unique regulatory and logistical challenges, along with opportunities for growth.

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

I have been an AANP member since graduating from Bastyr, and as a board member of the Massachusetts Society of Naturopathic Doctors, worked on a team to create a dual Mass + AANP membership. I firmly believe it is essential for naturopathic doctors to have a united voice. I maintain my membership to support AANP’s advocacy efforts at both the state and federal levels to expand access to naturopathic care.

I also value the member benefits, including accessible continuing education opportunities and discounts on resources such as NatMedPro and UpToDate, which support evidence-informed clinical practice.

How do you maintain balance between work and personal life?

Achieving balance took time and intention. I learned that setting clear boundaries—both for myself and for my patients—was essential. Creating protected time has allowed me to show up more fully in my work while maintaining a healthier and more sustainable work-life balance.

What do you think is important for the naturopathic profession to take note of - what trends or changes are you seeing?

The pace of change in the world is accelerating rapidly. I’m especially drawn to continuing education that deepens our theoretical foundations while also offering practical, clinically relevant applications. Staying grounded in naturopathic principles while adapting to emerging research and systems is increasingly important.



7. Anything else we've missed that is important?

Boston Holistic Health Center continues to grow, and we are currently looking to add another holistic provider to our team. Please feel free to reach out if you know someone who might be a great fit. If you're in the Boston area, I also warmly welcome colleagues to stop by and say hello.

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<https://bostonholistichealth.com>

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