Practitioners of Natural Healing: Acupuncturists, Traditional Chinese Medicine Doctors, Herbalists, Homeopaths and other occupations

An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia
Practitioners of Natural Healing (NOC 3232)

Practitioners of Natural Healing may also be called:

- acupuncturist / doctor of acupuncture
- aromatherapist
- auriculotherapist
- CMD (Chinese medicine doctor)
- herbalist, chartered / herb practitioner
- holistic practitioner
- homeopath / homeopathic practitioner
- hypnotherapist, clinical
- iridologist, certified
- practitioner, ayurvedic
- practitioner, medical Qi gong
- practitioner, osteopathic manual
- reflexologist, certified
- rolf er, certified
- traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) doctor

1. What Would I Do?

Practitioners of Natural Healing provide alternative forms of health care to promote, maintain and restore the holistic health of patients. They may use traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) techniques and other forms of treatment including acupuncture, herbology or reflexology. Practitioners’ may perform the following duties:
Acupuncturists:
- diagnose symptoms, diseases, physiological disorders and injuries
- treat patients with acupuncture needles or through the use of heat, acupressure, moxibustion, cupping or electric current or rays of light

Traditional Chinese medical practitioners:
- diagnose diseases, physiological disorders and injuries
- treat patients using raw herbs and other medicines, dietary supplements or acupuncture

Herbalists:
- assess patients and guide them in the use of herbs for the treatment of conditions such as arthritis, rheumatism, asthma, skin disorders and stomach ailments
- may cultivate and sell herbal compounds

Homeopaths:
- diagnose illnesses and treat them by giving, in a chemical or herbal form, a small dose of the illness itself or by suggesting lifestyle changes

Reflexologists:
- apply gentle finger pressure to specific spots on clients' hands or feet to bring about relaxation and better health and well-being

More information:
- WorkBC Career Profile for practitioners of natural healing
  https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3232

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Practitioners of Natural Healing should be:
- caring and compassionate
- patient
- empathetic

Practitioners should have:
- listening skills
- communication skills
Work may involve exposure to bacteria or viruses that could pose a health risk, although safety precautions are taken. Practitioners are on their feet much of the time and often work on evenings and weekends.

Sources:
- WorkBC Career Profile for Practitioners of Natural Healing: http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3232
- Career Cruising database (Profile for ‘Acupuncturist’)
  Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page: http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the average annual median salary for practitioners of natural healing is $18,890. JobBank Canada provides the following hourly wage across Canada for Practitioners of Natural Healing (including Chinese medical practitioner, acupuncturist, herbalist, homeopath, reflexologist):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Wage ($/hr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table from Job Bank Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng Note: JobBank only provides hourly wages for Canada; figures for provinces & regions are not available

Self-employed practitioners of natural healing are responsible for covering their own overhead expenses, such as rent and liability insurance.

Sources:
- WorkBC Career Profile for Practitioners of Natural Healing: http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/33232
- Career Cruising database (Profile for ‘Acupuncturist’).
  Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page: http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising
4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

JobBank Canada reports that for the 2015-2017 projection period, employment opportunities will be good for Practitioners of Natural Healing (NOC 3232) in British Columbia.

Employment growth is expected to be strong and a large number of people are expected to retire.

Growth will be greatest in these regions:

- Lower Mainland & Southwest (2.2% annual employment growth and total 620 job openings from 2015-2025)
- Vancouver Island Coast (2.2% annual employment growth and total of 180 job openings from 2015-2025)
- Thompson-Okanagan (1.6% annual employment growth and total 80 job openings from 2015-2025)

Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profile for Practitioners of Natural Healing
  https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3232
- Job Bank Canada: http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/job_search.do
5. How do I become a Practitioner of Natural Healing?

**Acupuncturists:**
In BC, you usually need to complete a three-year diploma program in acupuncture from a private institute (e.g. [http://www.tcmcollege.com/](http://www.tcmcollege.com/)) or complete some university undergraduate studies in science and training in a related health-care discipline or gain work experience under the supervision of a registered acupuncturist.

**Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioners:**
In BC, you usually need to complete a three- to four-year diploma program in traditional Chinese medicine from a private institute (e.g. [http://www.tcmcollege.com/](http://www.tcmcollege.com/)) or completion of a program in traditional Chinese medicine from recognized medical schools abroad.

**Licensing & Certification for Acupuncturists & Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners and TCM Herbalists:**
In BC, you must be registered with the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia (CTMA) ([http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/)) in order to practice traditional Chinese medicine and use any of these designations:

- **Doctor of Traditional Chinese Medicine (Dr.TCM):** a registrant authorized to practice acupuncture, and prescribe, compound or dispense Chinese herbal medicine. This registrant has met training/examination requirements at a higher level than registrants with the other titles.
- **Registered Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner (R.TCM.P.)** a registrant authorized to practice acupuncture, and prescribe, compound or dispense Chinese herbal medicine.
- **Registered Acupuncturist (R.Ac.)** a registrant authorized to practice acupuncture.
- **Registered Traditional Chinese Medicine Herbalist (R.TCM.H.)** a registrant authorized to prescribe, compound or dispense Chinese herbal medicine

  Information on how *internationally trained practitioners* can register with the College is available at: [http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/registration/internationally-trained-practitioners/](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/registration/internationally-trained-practitioners/). Requirements include approved education, examinations ([http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/examinations/](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/examinations/)), and criminal record review.

**Other Practitioners of Natural Healing:**

**Reflexologist, Homeopath, Rolfer, Osteopathic Manual Practitioner, Herbal Therapist (western herbalism), Aromatherapists and other occupations:**

Other occupations in this group usually require completion of training programs specific to their type of practice and some supervised practical training. Some occupations have professional associations that certify their members *but licensing by a regulatory body is not required.* For information on these occupations, see:

- **Homeopath:** BC Society of Homeopaths [https://bcsh.ca/](https://bcsh.ca/)
- **Herbal Therapist:** certification as ‘Professional Registered Herbal Therapist’ (RHT) through Canadian Herbalist’s Association of BC, CHA of BC [http://www.chaofbc.ca/](http://www.chaofbc.ca/)
6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?
Practitioners of Natural Healing may:
- be employed by clinics, health clubs and spas
- work in chiropractic or other health care offices
- work independently in their own office/clinic

Finding Advertised Jobs

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the Vancouver Sun & The Province at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the Vancouver Sun on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in The Province on Sundays.

Online Job Postings

- Chinese Medicine & Acupuncture Association of Canada CMAAC
  http://www.cmaac.ca/classifieds/employment_opportunities
- Indeed.ca
  http://ca.indeed.com/Acupuncture-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC
  http://ca.indeed.com/Chinese-Medicine-Traditional-jobs
  http://ca.indeed.com/Reflexology-jobs-in-British-Columbia
  http://ca.indeed.com/Osteopath-jobs
  http://ca.indeed.com/Herbal-jobs
- Neuvoo
  http://neuvoo.ca/en
- WorkBC Job Postings
  http://www.workbc.ca/JobSeekers/SearchResults.aspx
- Job Bank
Finding “Hidden Jobs”

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you with finding jobs in this “hidden” job market.

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of employers who are in the natural healing / health care sector. Contact them directly to find out if they’re hiring.

- **College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia, Practitioner Directory**
  [https://portal.ctcma.bc.ca/public](https://portal.ctcma.bc.ca/public)

- **AIMS (Alternative and integrative medical society) Wellness Directory**
  [http://www.aims.ubc.ca/directory-online-edition/](http://www.aims.ubc.ca/directory-online-edition/) [select a relevant therapy to see listings]

- **Reflexology Association of BC (RABC) Practitioners**
  [http://www.reflexologyofbc.com/find.htm](http://www.reflexologyofbc.com/find.htm) [listed by community]

- **BC Society of Homeopaths (BCSH)**
  [https://bcsh.ca/find_homeopath/](https://bcsh.ca/find_homeopath/) [listed by community]

- **Canadian Herbalist’s Association of BC – Business Directory**

- **BC Association of Practising Aromatherapists**

- **Reference Canada**

Click on “Start Search” beside Canadian Businesses, then select the “Advanced Search” button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter “Alternative Medicine” OR your specific occupation (e.g. “herbalist”, “acupuncture”, “reflexologists”) and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.
Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

Networking and the Hidden Job Market:

When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain “Canadian experience.” They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.

Volunteer opportunities

- Volunteer BC
  http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/
- GoVolunteer.ca
  http://govolunteer.ca/
- Charity Village
  https://charityvillage.com/jobs/find-jobs.aspx?type=adv [in ‘Position Type’ box, select ‘unpaid volunteer position’ and then select a relevant ‘Job Category’ e.g. ‘Healthcare’]
- Volunteer Connections.net
  http://www.volunteerconnections.net/ [volunteer opportunities in Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, New Westminster, Anmore, Belcarra]
- BC Cancer Agency
  http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/careers/volunteer-with-us
Practitioners of Natural Healing: An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia

- **Chrysalis Society**
  
  http://www.chrysalissociety.com/WomenLeadingWomen/Volunteers.aspx  [holistic service volunteers for women dealing with addiction recovery in a residential environment]

- **Herbalists without Borders – Vancouver Lower Mainland**
  
  https://www.facebook.com/HWBVancouver/  [provides care to communities and countries impacted by natural disasters, violent conflicts, poverty, trauma and other access barriers to health and wellness]

- **Tzu Chi International Medical Association of Canada**
  

- **Vancouver Friends for Life**
  
  http://www.friendsforlife.ca/volunteer  [supports individuals living with very serious illnesses by providing complementary and alternative health services]

**Volunteering in Health Care Facilities**

The following organizations accept volunteers in hospitals, residential care facilities, adult day centres, and other community settings.

- **Vancouver Coastal Health**
  
  http://www.vch.ca/get-involved/volunteer/

- **Fraser Health Authority**
  
  http://www.fraserhealth.ca/about-us/volunteer/

- **Providence Health Care**
  
  http://www.providencehealthcare.org/volunteers

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**
  
  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca  
  [Search Networking for Employment]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
  
  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca  
  [Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]
7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience. Use the library catalogue, [http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/](http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/) to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

For more information see:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
  Go to [http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca](http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca)
  [Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

Chinese traditional medical practitioners may practise as acupuncturists. With many years of experience and additional training in business and management, acupuncturists and practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine may operate their own clinics.

Sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Practitioners of Natural Healing**
  [https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3232](https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3232)

- **Career Cruising database** (Profile for ‘Acupuncturist’)


- **AIMS Alternative and Integrative Medical Society (B.C.)**
  [http://www.aims.ubc.ca/](http://www.aims.ubc.ca/)

- **BC Alliance of Aromatherapy**

- **BC Association of Practicing Aromatherapists**
Practitioners of Natural Healing: An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia

- BC Society of Homeopaths
  https://bcsh.ca/
- Canadian Herbalist’s Association of BC
  http://www.chaofbc.ca/
- College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia (CTMA)
  http://www.ctcma.bc.ca/
- International College of Traditional Chinese Medicine of Vancouver
  http://www.tcmcollege.com/
- Osteopathy BC: Society for the Promotion of Manual Practice Osteopathy
  http://www.osteopathybc.ca/
- Reflexology Association of BC
  http://www.reflexologyofbc.com/index.htm

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/.