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# How the **Self Care Framework** Will Impact Retailers and Consumers – *What You Need to Know*

Despite Health Canada touring across the country to educate the natural health community about the Self Care Framework, most are still unaware of the upcoming changes. Health Canada’s plan is to repeal the Natural Health Products regulations and to regulate natural health products, chemical non-prescription drugs, and cosmetics under a single set of regulations for “Self Care” products.

One of the changes will be a reduction in allowable treatment claims. Manufacturers will no longer be able to use traditional use evidence to support efficacy claims. Health Canada has also said that claims will not be allowed for any condition for which the consumer would seek the advice of a health care practitioner. This will further restrict claims.

In order to ensure that claims and the sharing of truthful health information are censored, Health Canada will have two new enforcement powers. Currently, a store or a manufacturer making unapproved treatment claims is facing a maximum Court fine of \$5,000. This is going to be increased to fines of \$5,000,000. Health Canada will also now have the ability to impose administrative penalties. Inspectors will be able to issue administrative fines to stores

without there being any option of disputing the fine in Court.

The increase of fines from \$5,000 to \$5,000,000 will apply to any violations of the law.

Eventually the cost of natural products will rise. For the first time manufacturers and distributors will have to pay yearly licencing fees. Some manufacturers have products that are not profitable. They include them in their product line because people rely on them. These uneconomic products will be lost as costs increase. Eventually manufacturers will pass on their higher costs to retailers and consumers.

Manufacturers will also be facing higher costs due to new administrative penalties. They will also be facing higher costs as the standards of evidence for safety and efficacy become harmonized with the standards for chemical drugs. Eventually these costs will be passed onto the consumer.

Currently practitioners and pharmacies can compound natural products for individuals. It is unknown if this compounding exemption will continue. Health Canada refuses to say.

These are the most sweeping and negative changes to the regulation of natural products ever proposed. The impact on retailers and consumers will



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be significant. Truthful health information will be censored. Penalties will increase. The cost of products will rise. Some products will be lost. Even the loss of the name “natural health product” will change consumer sentiment.

A non-profit organization called the Natural Health Product Protection Association has started a campaign to stop these changes. Please visit [nhppa.org/STOPHC](http://nhppa.org/STOPHC) to learn more about the Self Care Framework and what you can do, or use the QR code at the end of this article. The Self Care Framework is the biggest threat to our right to access natural products that we have ever faced. Get involved. Together we can protect our access to natural products. **HWR**

