A Biblical approach replaces Spiritual Problems of Traditional Medical Practitioners with Positive Christian Values

- We must not compromise with the devil. (Genesis 3:5; Daniel; Ezra 10; I Samuel 28; II Kings 18:4)
- Sharing open Knowledge brings freedom from fear. (Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 61:1-2; Acts 15; Romans 8:18-21; II Kings 7:9) But this freedom must be used in the right way for the benefit of others. (Galatians 5:13)
- As Christians we should emphasise Service not Power. (John 10:11-12; Matthew 20: 25-28; Isaiah 58:6-7)
- The Bible condemns Exploitation. (Mark 5:26; Proverbs 22:22; II Kings 5 19 forward; Amos 2:7a; Amos 5:11-12; Micah 6:8b; Proverbs 29:7; Zechariah 7:9-10)
- NB Charging for service is not exploitation: (I Corinthians 9:9; Deuteronomy 25:4)
- God not money needs to be central. (I Timothy 6:10)
- Avoiding Syncretism. (Isaiah 56:1-2)
- We need to address traditions that are against God's way. (Mark 7:6-10)
- Jesus liberates some things that the devil or godless men have bound. (Acts 10:14-15)

Guidelines for Teaching on Natural Medicines through the Church

Why are Natural Medicines relevant for the church?

- They are Biblical.
- When you are physically sick, your spiritual ministry is affected.
- The good pastor is concerned about the health of his people. (contrast Ezekiel 34:4)
- They portray God's plan for man - working with creation (Genesis 2:15)
- They are using what God has given us in creation, and by using them we are also learning to take care of creation.
- They are practical for serving one another - they help us care and show love.
- It is our holistic responsibility – God is concerned about the whole person and whole community. The Bible, as does African culture, sees people as a whole.
- The approach focuses upon teaching, which is much less divisive in churches than projects are.
- Their use is a strategy for the poor - the poor can use them for themselves without money and the Bible tells us to be concerned for the poor.
- They are locally found and the church is strong at the local level.
When is it Appropriate to Use Natural Medicines?

- When people cannot easily access (afford) conventional medicine.
- They are particularly relevant for common straightforward complaints.
- External use is particularly easy because dosage is not very significant.
- They have a particular place in "First Aid" and as medicines for home use.
- They are not second best - they are often the preferred choice (e.g. Frangipani for Herpes Zoster) - so they fit in every situation.
- It is important however to know the limitations - available knowledge on natural medicines does not enable us to treat everything - they are appropriate for some conditions and for others referral should be used.
- They need always to be linked with sharing knowledge, including when other medical help is needed.

Biblical Support for Using Natural Medicines

In the Bible we find some themes that help us use natural medicines with confidence, knowing that we are not going against God's will:

- The Bible has a holistic view of health. (Proverbs 13:12; Proverbs 17:22; III John v2)
- The pastor is expected to have concern for the health of his congregation. (Ezekiel 34:4)
- Natural medicines are part of creation
  - God looked at what he created and it was 'good'. (Genesis 1:31)
  - The way that creation is used and the motivation is important. (I Timothy 4:4)
  - God created variety for our use. (Genesis 1:29)
- The Bible recognises the healing potential of leaves. (Ezekiel 47:12; Revelation 22:1-2)
- Natural Medicines were the medicine of Biblical times. (II Kings 20:1-7; Isaiah 38:21; Luke 10:34)
- Jesus recognised that it is normal and appropriate to be growing herbs, being part of the garden. (Luke 11:42)
- We should redeem what the ungodly have taken by basing our use of natural medicines on scripture. (Acts 10:14-15; Romans 8:20-21)