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Joining forces for natural support

Naturopath sees her skills as complementary, writes **Josh Jennings**.

Naturopath Belinda Kirkpatrick says one of the attractions of her job is the relationships she gets to build with doctors, specialists and other health practitioners.

Although naturopathy has often been portrayed as an alternative to medicine, Kirkpatrick says she sees natural medicine and medicine as complementary to one another.

"There are so many things we can treat and identify naturally, which is fantastic, but ... I think a lot of people understand that naturopaths are really well-trained and work closely with doctors where possible."

Kirkpatrick practises at clinics in Balmain and Double Bay in Sydney. She conducts comprehensive health assessments for clients; she consults with them on dietary, lifestyle and wellness education and treats them with herbal medicines and nutritional supplements.

She estimates she sees about



40 per cent of her clients for general health issues and the remainder for issues under the umbrella of women and children's health. She attributes her special interest in women and children's health to studying naturopathy while she was pregnant.

During that period, she also saw an influential fertility naturopath and that naturopath's clinic is where she completed a lot of her



Belinda Kirkpatrick (left) enjoys working with other health professionals. Herbal medicines (above) are part of the naturopath's armoury. Photo: AP

own clinical and practical hours. "While I was studying, I was so immersed in that world of new motherhood and babies and little people that a lot of my focus went there," she says.

Kirkpatrick's qualifications include a bachelor of health science (naturopathy), associate degree in clinical science and master of reproductive medicine. Since starting her career as a

naturopath more than a decade ago, she has had various interesting career experiences including lecturing at Endeavour College, presenting to different groups on health and dietary topics and being part of the expert panel for *Women's Fitness* magazine. Kirkpatrick is also the designer of women's hormonal health app Seed and author of forthcoming health book *Healthy*

Hormones (due for release through Murdoch Books next March).

As she talks about her future in naturopathy, she notes she's surrounded by pages and pages of her book. It's a reminder of the exciting chapter she's at in her career.

"I love my job," she says. "I never would not want to go to work. I just get such a buzz from being there and interacting with people."