

Corporate Strategy

2016-2019



General
Osteopathic
Council

Introduction

This document sets out the strategic priorities of the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) over the next three years, and has three main purposes:

- 1.** It describes what Council wishes the organisation to achieve.
- 2.** It provides a mandate for the organisation's work programme, led by the Chief Executive and staff team.
- 3.** It provides a framework for the monitoring of the organisation's performance by Council.

The Strategy describes our goals and key activities against three main objectives. It also describes how we will measure our performance, and how assurance is provided that the organisation is operating effectively.

Each year we will publish a detailed Business Plan setting out the work we will undertake in order to meet our goals. Council will receive at each meeting a report of progress against the annual Business Plan.

Our aim as a regulator

The statutory duty of the GOsC is to 'develop and regulate the profession of osteopathy' in order to ensure public protection.

Our aim as a regulator is:

'To fulfil our statutory duty to protect public and patient safety through targeted and effective regulation, working actively and in partnership with others to ensure a high quality of patient experience and of osteopathic practice.'

Our strategic objectives 2016-19

To meet this aim, in 2016-19 we will be working towards three high-level strategic objectives, which are:

- 1.** To promote public and patient safety through patient-centred, proportionate, targeted and effective regulatory activity.
- 2.** To encourage and facilitate continuous improvement in the quality of osteopathic healthcare.
- 3.** To use our resources efficiently and effectively, while adapting and responding to change in the external environment.

Partnership is at the heart of delivering our objectives; a regulator is not synonymous with the profession it regulates and we believe strongly that, where appropriate, we should work with others to achieve them.

Goals and activities 2016-19

Strategic objective 1: To promote public and patient safety through patient-centred, proportionate, targeted and effective regulatory activity

OUR GOALS

1. To ensure that osteopaths keep their knowledge and skills up to date, and continually enhance and improve their practice

2. To ensure that osteopathic education is of high quality and continues to evolve to reflect changes in education and healthcare

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THEM

1. We will implement a new CPD scheme that supports and encourages practitioner reflection, peer learning and peer review.
 2. We will provide resources to support learning in key areas such as communication and consent.
 3. We will monitor implementation and impact of our new CPD scheme using a proportionate and risk-based approach.
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1. We will work with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) to maintain the quality of osteopathic education and training.
 2. We will work with the QAA and osteopathic educational institutions to develop and implement a more risk-based and effective approach to quality assurance.
 3. We will work with osteopathic educational institutions to support high standards of professionalism among students.
 4. We will work with osteopathic educational institutions to identify and disseminate best practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
 5. We will work with the Council of Osteopathic Educational Institutions to support the development of osteopathic educators.
 6. We will continue to update and embed relevant GOsC guidance within education.

OUR GOALS

3. To ensure patient safety by taking effective, timely and proportionate action on complaints about osteopaths

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THEM

1. We will investigate allegations made against osteopaths that meet our threshold for consideration, and manage the adjudication process for complaints where a case to answer has been found.
2. We will seek to identify improvements in our fitness to practise processes and, where necessary, seek changes to our rules to implement these.
3. We will continue to improve our service to complainants and witnesses, to ensure high levels of confidence in our processes.
4. We will work with the Institute of Osteopathy, where appropriate, to ensure that registrants are able to access support when they are subject to complaints against them.
5. We will seek to use the findings from complaints to identify ways of improving standards and reducing the risk of complaints being made.

4. To ensure that only those eligible to do so practise as osteopaths in the UK and to increase understanding, awareness and use of the Register

1. We develop and implement improved assessment processes for EU and other international applicants.
2. We will work with other international competent authorities to develop mutual recognition of qualifications, and simplify registration processes.
3. We will continue to promote the use of the GOsC registration mark within the osteopathic profession.
4. We will seek to develop greater awareness of the Register and our regulatory role with other regulated professions, regulators, patients and the public.
5. We will continue to foster links and share best practice within the international osteopathic community.

5. To put patients, patient-centred regulation and patient-centred healthcare at the heart of our work

1. We will continue to improve our service to complainants and witnesses, to ensure high levels of confidence in our processes.
2. We will continue to seek input to all our policy development and projects from our Patient Partnership Group, and forge links with patient groups across the UK.
3. We will continue to promote enhanced patient involvement in osteopathic education.
4. We will encourage the use of patient feedback by osteopaths within our new CPD scheme.
5. We will work with the National Council for Osteopathic Research and the Institute of Osteopathy to promote the use of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) to support high-quality osteopathic care.

Strategic objective 2: To encourage and facilitate continuous improvement in the quality of osteopathic healthcare

OUR GOALS

1. To promote high standards of practice and professionalism in the osteopathic profession

2. To ensure that the osteopathic profession continues to develop its capacity to improve patient experience and high-quality care

3. To use evidence from data collection, risk analysis and research to inform the development of osteopathic regulation and practice

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THEM

1. We will revise and update the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and improve the guidance to support osteopaths in practice.
 2. We will work with the Institute of Osteopathy and others to develop a shared understanding of professional values and promote greater ownership of standards within the profession.
 3. We will develop supplementary guidance and new learning materials to support greater understanding and effective use of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
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1. We will make strategic investment in development projects led by the profession, where these meet our criteria for catalysing improvements in quality or safety of osteopathic practice.
 2. We will continue to support existing development initiatives, including those around:
 - mentoring and the transition into practice
 - accreditation of advanced clinical practice
 - leadership development
 - implementation of service standards.
 3. With the Institute of Osteopathy we will support capacity building within local osteopathic groups to contribute to the development of the profession and the new CPD scheme.
 4. We will contribute to the NHS England Medicines Scoping Project exploring the extension of prescribing rights to new professions.
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1. We will continue to track complaints and claims made against osteopaths to identify areas for improvement within practice.
 2. We will improve the analysis of data held by the GOsC to gain understanding of those osteopaths who are at greater risk of underperforming practice.
 3. We will continue to support the National Council for Osteopathic Research as a means to increase research awareness and research activity within the osteopathic profession.
 4. We will use the findings from all of these activities, other research and opinion surveys to provide feedback to the osteopathic profession for the improvement of education and practice.

Strategic objective 3: To use our resources efficiently and effectively, while adapting and responding to change in the external environment

OUR GOALS

1. To enhance the quality of service that we provide to patients and the public, registrants and our other stakeholders

2. To operate efficient, economic and effective operational systems and processes

3. To operate with high standards of corporate governance and respond effectively to changes in the external environment

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THEM

1. We will continue to strive to provide a high-quality and responsive service to all our customers.
 2. We will ensure that all our communications are diverse, targeted, informative and effective, working with others to increase our impact whenever we can.
 3. We will use a range of survey and feedback mechanisms to enhance all our activities.
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1. We will review our information technology requirements and prepare a new medium-term IT strategy.
 2. We will seek to ensure that our transactions are paper-free wherever possible.
 3. We will continue to identify value for money savings in all our operations.
 4. We will continue to embed high standards of information governance within the GOsC.
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1. We will build the capacity of the new Council to ensure that it provides appropriate scrutiny and assurance of the GOsC's activities.
 2. We will create a new policy advisory forum to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders can contribute to our policy development.
 3. We will ensure that our appointments meet the best practice standards of the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care.
 4. We will continue to meet our duties under the *Equality Act 2010* and embed good practice in equality and diversity in all our work.
 5. We will continue to work with the Department of Health (England) and our fellow regulators in preparing for legislative change.

Performance measurement, assurance and risk management

We will use a number of means to measure our effectiveness as a regulator. These will be balanced across three main areas:

1. Ensuring that our statutory duties are met and that we have the confidence of the public and registrants for what we do.
2. Providing demonstrable public value from the outcome of our work, both internal activity and that delivered in partnership with others.
3. Operating effectively as an organisation, including making effective use of resources to achieve our objectives.

The way in which we will measure our success across these areas is set out in the table below.

AREA OF PERFORMANCE	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
<p>1. Meeting our statutory duties and maintaining confidence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The public and registrants continue to have confidence in our work. 2. We continue to meet the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care's standards of good regulation. 3. Privy Council and Department of Health intervention remains unnecessary. 4. Appeals against statutory decisions are not upheld.
<p>2. Providing demonstrable public value</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholders – including patients, registrants and partners – are satisfied with our performance. 2. We maintain/improve standards measured through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes of fitness to practice complaints • volume/types of complaints • engagement in new CPD activities and processes • implementation/outcomes of development projects • reduction in conditions imposed on Recognised Qualifications • successful activity under section 32 of the <i>Osteopaths Act 1993</i> (including prosecutions).
<p>3. Using our resources to operate effectively</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We meet a range of key performance indicators, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processing of registration applications • handling of fitness to practise complaints • auditing of CPD returns • performance against customer service standards. 2. We implement improvements identified from audit and other feedback.

Assurance and risk management

Council holds the Chief Executive to account for the delivery of the Corporate Strategy, annual Business Plan, budget, risk mitigation and organisational performance. It also ensures that the appropriate audit, control and assurance systems are in place.

Council has agreed its level of tolerance of risk across the breadth of the GOsC's functions, and it considers regularly the organisation's key risks and the mitigating actions. Council is supported in this function by the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee also agrees an annual programme of internal audit and the scope of the annual financial audit. It reviews the findings from these activities and the Executive's response, and makes recommendations to Council, including providing an opinion annually on the GOsC's systems and processes of assurance.

External accountability includes an annual Performance Review and other audit activity carried out by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care, and an Annual Report which is laid before Parliament.

Principles that underpin the work of the GOsC

The GOsC is committed to conducting all its activities as a regulator and an employer based on a number of key principles:

Proportionality

We will ensure that the regulatory burden is no greater than it needs to be to deliver our statutory duty, focusing our resources on areas of risk to public protection and where there is scope to achieve the most in terms of improving standards of osteopathic practice.

Fairness

We will be consistent in the development and application of our policies and procedures in order to ensure fairness, with the aims of promoting equality, valuing diversity and removing any unfair discrimination.

Accountability

We will publicise our actions and decisions, wherever possible, ensuring that the information is clearly explained and easily accessible. We will explain how we have taken our stakeholders' views into consideration in developing policy and in improving our performance. Council will seek to exemplify high standards of governance.

Anticipation

We will monitor trends in health and social care, regulation, osteopathic practice and education, in order to respond effectively to change and to support the osteopathic profession to respond accordingly.

Inclusivity

We will respond to the needs of patients, the public, registrants and other stakeholders, taking their views into account in deciding the most effective way to carry out our regulatory functions and working in partnership with others, where appropriate, to achieve our goals.

Efficiency

We will foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, taking steps to benchmark our performance periodically and setting targets to achieve best practice.

We will use our resources efficiently, seeking to achieve further efficiencies without compromising the quality of our work.



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