



**General
Osteopathic
Council**

9 February 2012

Consultation on proposal to reduce the GOsC registration fee

The purpose of this consultation is to invite views on a General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) proposal about how best to reduce the registration fee in 2012-13. There are two consultation issues:

1. Whether identified savings should be passed back to registrants via a fee reduction, and
2. Whether the reduction in fees should be focused on (a) the highest fee of £750 or on (b) an across the board fee reduction.

We would welcome responses up to midnight on 26 February 2012.

Background

The GOsC is undertaking a fundamental review of its costs in order to reduce the financial burden on our registrants. Significant cuts to operating costs have been identified and are in the process of being implemented. We believe that any savings arising from this should now be passed back to registrants at the earliest opportunity. The cost review will continue with the aim of seeking further fee reductions for osteopaths in subsequent years.

In January 2012 the GOsC estimated that the savings to registrants in the 2012-2013 financial year could be in the order of 8%, over and above inflationary increases which are absorbed by the GOsC. We are now in a position to propose changes to the fee levels.

It is planned that the fee reduction would come into effect on 9 May 2012, allowing sufficient time for the new fee rules, needed to bring about the change, to be approved by the GOsC Council on 29 March 2012 and by the Privy Council. This date also ensures that the majority of registrants will benefit from the fee reduction as quickly as possible.

Consultation issue 1: reducing the fee

Last year the Government asked all healthcare regulators to review their processes and to cut costs. The GOsC has started this process and has identified savings that the Council proposes should be passed back to registrants via a fee reduction in 2012-13.

Question 1: do you agree that identified savings should be passed back to registrants via a fee reduction?

Consultation issue 2: how the fee reduction should be applied

There is a range of different fees paid by registrants, depending on how long they have been registered. New registrants pay a subsidised fee, £375 in year one of practice and £500 in year two, before moving up to the full £750 fee in year three of practice.

There are also reduced fees for registrants who are non-practising or working abroad. These subsidised fees are offered even though the administrative costs associated with registration are the same as for those who pay the full £750 fee.

The Government has made clear the need to contain, or where possible reduce, the financial burden on registrants and the GOsC has identified two options for achieving this.

The first option is to apply the proposed fee reduction only to those osteopaths paying the highest fee – that of £750 – some 80% of GOsC registrants. This option recognises that these osteopaths bear the highest financial burden and, in effect, provide a subsidy for non-practising osteopaths and new entrants to the Register. Under this option, registrants who have been registered the longest (and who are likely to have made a significant financial contribution to the development of osteopathic regulation) will benefit immediately from a larger reduction in their fees.

The second option is to apply the proposed reduction across all registration fee levels, including those already subsidised. This would mean a slightly smaller reduction for registrants paying the full £750 registration fee.

Both options would also include some minor adjustments to the current administration charge that is added to payments made by instalment, so that in most cases it would be lower than at present. These changes would more accurately reflect the additional costs to the GOsC of instalment payments.

In summary: if the savings we have identified are focused on the highest fee, which is paid by the most registrants, that fee can be reduced by 10% (option 1 below). If, alternatively, the fees for all osteopaths are reduced (option 2), the reduction will be on average 8.87%.

The table below shows the amounts payable under the two options:

Fee levels	Current fee structure £	Option 1 – Reduce the highest fee only £	Option 2 – Reduce all fees £
Year 1	375.00	375.00	340.00
Year 2	500.00	500.00	455.00
Year 2 reduced rate	250.00	250.00	230.00
Year 3	750.00	675.00	685.00
Year 3 reduced rate	375.00	375.00	340.00

Question 2: should the reduction in fees be focused on the highest fee of £750 (Option 1), or applied as an across the board fee reduction (Option 2)?