



General
Osteopathic
Council

Regional Communications Network and Osteopathic Development Group

Friday 18 March 2016

Session 4: Advertising – what's your evidence?

Part 1

The iO and the GOsC provide an update on current advertising compliance, work with the ASA and CAP, and challenges for the profession.

Robust osteopathic evidence is central to advertising compliance and meeting patient needs for good quality healthcare information. NCOR leads on why all osteopaths should be involved in patient data collection – and how Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are vital building up the evidence around osteopathic practice.

The enclosed extract from a recent issue of *the osteopath* outlines the purpose and value of PROMs.

Part 2

The Osteopathic Alliance will lead an interactive session, seeking your views on suitable ways of describing osteopathy and osteopathic practice.



EUGENIO MARONGIU / SHUTTERSTOCK

Collecting data on patient outcomes

Want to gather evidence about the effect of osteopathic treatment on your patients' health? **Carol Fawkes**, Senior Research Officer at the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR), explains why PROMs could be music to your ears

It may seem that osteopaths are constantly being urged to ask their patients for information, but the fact is that it is difficult to measure or improve the quality of osteopathic patient management without good-quality data on the outcomes of osteopathic care.

Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are an effective way of obtaining and tracking patients' own assessment of their health over time. NCOR has developed a PROMs app (for use on PCs, laptops or smartphones) specifically for osteopathic

patients, as we appreciate that you may feel more comfortable asking patients to provide feedback to an independent third party rather than directly to you.

A summary of all the data contributed by your patients using the app is sent to you periodically at a time suitable and relevant to your practice; this summary can help you to reflect on your practice, and inform your treatment protocols. Additionally, all the data collected by the app will be combined to give us a national picture of osteopathic treatment outcomes.

Know your PROMs from your PREOS

While PROMs is designed to record evidence on the outcomes of osteopathic treatment, NCOR has developed another online system – Patient Reported Experiences of Osteopathic Services (PREOS) – which collects information about patients' experiences (good or bad) that we can all learn from.

Information entered on the PREOS website at: www.ncorpreos.org.uk is entirely anonymous, and will be analysed by NCOR annually so that learning points can be fed back to the profession.

As well as adopting PROMs in your practice and encouraging your patients to use the app, please let them know about PREOS; add the information to your welcome pack or patient information sheet. You'll be helping to make a real difference.

What will it tell me?

A patient is asked to complete a total of three questionnaires: one when they log in to the app for the first time, and again one week and six weeks later.

The first questionnaire collects information including:

- demographics (e.g. age, work status, sex and ethnicity)
- general health information (e.g. duration of symptoms)
- service data (e.g. waiting times to the first appointment offered, and the number of treatments received)
- scores (on a range of 0-10) in seven categories relating to the patient's health condition and how it affects their life.

The follow-up questionnaires collect those scores again, as well as basic details about patient experience and satisfaction; the final one also asks for the patient's overall impression of change in their health.

The app captures a lot of information but is designed to be easy to use; patients generally spend five to seven minutes completing the questionnaire.

Will patients use it?

Some osteopaths have told me that they doubt their older patients' ability to use the app, but more than 40 per cent of participants in NCOR's PROMs pilot this year were aged 60 or over – a figure that is not so surprising given that the Office for National Statistics reported in 2014 that almost half of over-65s use a computer every day (<http://bit.ly/ons-internet-access-2010>)

During the app's development, osteopathic patients were asked for their feedback and were overwhelmingly positive.

If you're still unsure whether your patients will want to complete an online questionnaire, why not ask them?

What do I have to do?

The work involved for osteopaths is minimal. Basically, you need to ask a patient whether they are willing to complete some questionnaires online; if they are, you give them an information sheet and a code for using the app.

The app does all the follow-up work automatically; there is nothing more for you to do, except wait to be sent the PROMs data for your practice.

i To find out about using the PROMs app in your practice, please email c.fawkes@qmul.ac.uk