



**Council**  
**25 November 2021**  
**Adjunctive Therapies Guidance**

<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Purpose</b>	For decision
<b>Issue</b>	Protecting patients and supporting other stakeholders in understanding the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards in relation to the breadth of practice undertaken by osteopaths.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To agree to proceed to formal consultation on the 'guidance on the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards in relation to the application of adjunctive therapies, non-osteopathic treatments or other work undertaken by osteopaths', in accordance with the strategy outlined.</li><li>2. To note the Equality Impact Assessment.</li></ol>
<b>Financial and resourcing implications</b>	Consultation and engagement costs are included in our 2021-22 budget.
<b>Equality and diversity implications</b>	Equality and diversity issues are a key component of this work. The development process has not revealed any particular equality, diversity and inclusion issues for groups with particular protected characteristics. However, we will explore this explicitly as part of the consultation. An equality impact assessment has been developed and is included as Annex D.
<b>Communications implications</b>	The consultation will be communicated to all GOsC stakeholders through our communication channels.
<b>Annexes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Draft guidance for osteopaths: 'guidance on the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards in relation to the application of adjunctive therapies, non-osteopathic treatments or other work undertaken by osteopaths'</li><li>B. Consultation strategy</li></ol>



C. Consultation document

D. Equality impact assessment

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## Key messages from the paper

- This paper outlines the development of draft guidance to support osteopaths engaged in adjunctive or complementary therapies in relation to the Osteopathic Practice Standards.
- The guidance uses fictional case examples to explore the issues that arise for osteopaths and patients when applying the Osteopathic Practice Standards in different contexts.
- Draft Guidance, a draft consultation strategy and draft consultation document is presented to Council for agreement to formal consultation. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to inform the consultation.
- This matter was considered by the Policy and Education Committee at its October 2021 meeting.

## Background

1. Our Business Plan for 2019-20 stated that we will: *'Explore the need for guidance or resources to support osteopaths engaged in adjunctive / complementary therapies and other stakeholders to understand the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards.'*
2. This activity was continued in the 2020-21, and 2021-22 Business Plan, the last of which was approved by Council in February 2021: *'Further develop and consult on guidance to support registrants who are engaged in adjunctive/complementary therapies to understand the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards'*
3. This paper presents draft guidance for approval by Council, along with a detailed consultation strategy, consultation document and Equality Impact Assessment.

## Discussion

4. In Spring 2019 the Professional Standards and Regulation teams hosted a seminar with osteopaths, lay people with experience of fitness to practise processes and patients to explore some of the issues relating to the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards in the context of adjunctive therapies.
5. Following this, we developed a number of fictional case examples illustrating the breadth of the challenges experienced by patients and osteopaths. At its meeting in October 2019 the Policy Advisory Committee<sup>1</sup> considered a paper which highlighted the work that we had done to explore and scope the issues at hand and proposed an approach for taking work on these issues forward.
6. We updated the Committee at its [June 2021](#) meeting on work undertaken in relation to the development of draft guidance to support osteopaths engaged in

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<sup>1</sup> Now Policy and Education Committee

adjunctive or complementary therapies in relation to the application of the [Osteopathic Practice Standards](#). The Committee agreed with the proposed plan to disseminate the draft guidance more widely over the summer, to inform the development of a final draft to be reported to the October Committee meeting.

7. The outcome of this dissemination was reported to the Committee in [October 2021](#), and the Committee agree to recommend the draft guidance for consultation in accordance with the strategy outlined.
8. The guidance (Annex A), uses fictional case examples to explore the issues that arise for osteopaths and patients when applying the Osteopathic Practice Standards in different contexts. This acknowledges the diversity of treatment approaches within the profession and clarifies the requirement for a patient-centred approach and adherence to the Osteopathic Practice Standards across all aspects of an osteopath's practice. It recognises that applying the standards of professionalism to all areas of an osteopath's practice presents few difficulties, but notes that there are potential challenges in understanding how to apply some of the other standards.
9. The guidance explores how the standards might be applied in the following circumstances:
  - a. Where an osteopath is also a member of another regulated profession and therefore subject to a different set of standards in addition to the Osteopathic Practice Standards.
  - b. Where the osteopath provides professional services other than osteopathy, either within or outside the healthcare context.
  - c. Where an osteopath seeks consent from a patient for a novel form of care or treatment.

#### *Consultation*

10. A consultation strategy is included as Annex B to this paper. The consultation document is included as Annex C.

#### *Equality Impact Assessment*

11. An Equality Impact Assessment has been developed and is included as Annex D.

#### *Timetable*

12. The indicative timetable for the consultation as set out in the strategy document is as follows:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Activity</b>
25 November 2022	Council approval of draft guidance for consultation and consultation approach
Early January 2022 – End March 2022	Consultation
April – May 2022	Analyse feedback and finalise draft guidance
June 2022	Report to Policy and Education Committee
July 2022	Report to Council
Following Council approval	Publish and publicise guidance

### **Recommendations**

1. To agree to proceed to formal consultation on the 'guidance on the application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards in relation to the application of adjunctive therapies, non-osteopathic treatments or other work undertaken by osteopaths', in accordance with the strategy outlined.
2. To note the Equality Impact Assessment.