



# COVID-19 Update

## A message from Matthew Redford, Acting Chief Executive and Registrar

I hope that you are keeping as well as you can during this difficult time. I recognise the COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges for the profession. In this everchanging landscape, the GOsC team is working hard to keep you updated on the latest guidance and to provide you with answers where we can. But please bear with us as we try to deal with the volume of queries.

This week we have received a large number of queries from osteopaths asking if osteopathic clinics should remain open. This morning we published a video where I outlined current government guidance which you can watch below.

Since I recorded the video yesterday evening, we have become aware of the latest government guidance (also released yesterday) which gives further clarity on [the issue of restricted movement](#). During the emergency period, no one can leave the place they are living without 'reasonable excuse'. In the guidance, a reasonable excuse includes the need to seek medical assistance from a defined list of medical or health services, and this list includes osteopaths.

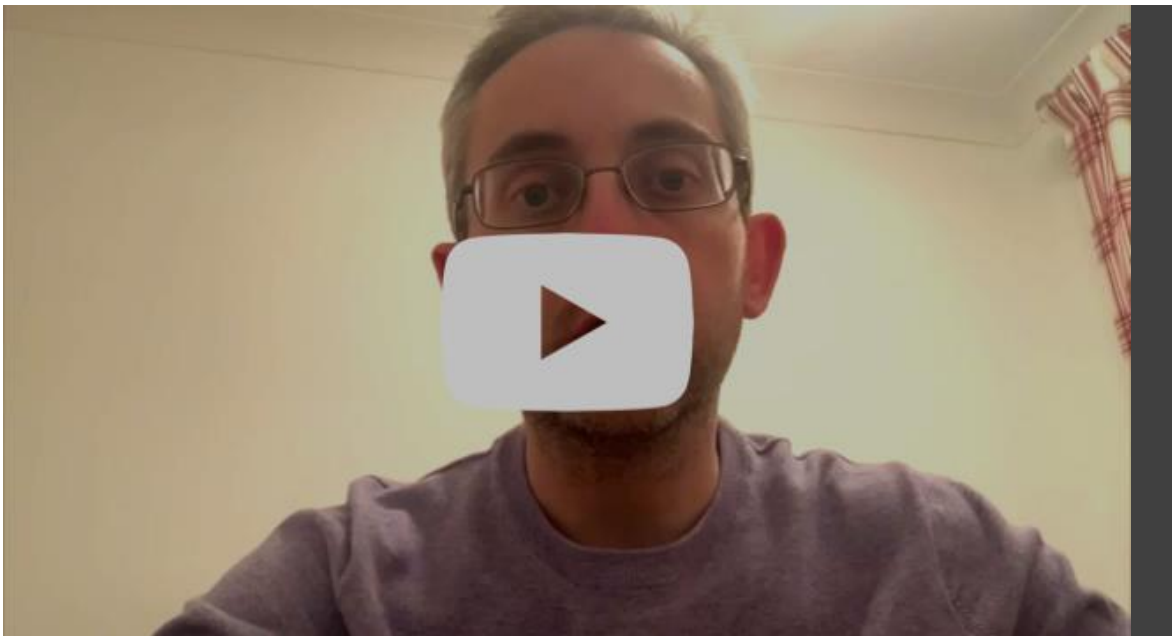
However, although this government guidance allows osteopaths to continue to practise, I would urge those of you who continue to keep your clinics open, to consider the government advice to stay home and save lives, and to consider speaking to patients via video call or over the phone instead.

If osteopaths choose to continue to practise, we urge them to use their professional judgement and follow both the updated government guidance and [our updated interim infection control guidance](#) which we updated again today.

In implementing the current [government guidance](#), we would strongly say once again that osteopaths must consider the risk to personal and public health in the current crisis.

We are continually discussing and updating our position about practice in line with that of government, which is very much subject to change. The Institute of Osteopathy, as the professional body for osteopaths, offers some [advice on phone and video consultations](#), referencing current thinking that all but urgent or emergency cases be conducted remotely.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to share some positive news with you. Health Education England (HEE) has advised the GOsC that hundreds of osteopaths have already offered their services to the NHS to support in the fight against COVID-19. There is some information below on how to go about doing this if you are willing but haven't yet done so. HEE has expressed gratitude for the clinical and administrative support being offered by osteopaths and to praise their courage in volunteering, which I would wholeheartedly echo.



Matthew Redford speaking from his home about the opening of clinics.

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### **Fitness to practise activities update**

We have issued a statement on fitness to practise activities emphasising that patient safety remains the top priority.

We are continuing to focus attention on triaging of concerns and risk management activity, and are prioritising high-risk investigations wherever possible.

Hearings that need to take precedence to meet public protection duties have been identified and plans are being implemented to run a number of virtual hearings and meetings remotely.

As the situation may change quickly, we will continue to review the measures in place and work collaboratively with our stakeholders. [Read full statement](#)

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### **GOSc warns osteopaths not to make false claims**

We are warning osteopaths not to claim or imply that osteopathic treatment could help boost the immune system in patients suffering from COVID-19.

Claiming in any promotional material or online content that osteopathy has a part to play in the frontline care of patients with COVID-19, is likely to

breach [Advertising Standards Authority \(ASA\) guidance](#) or trading standards law.

COVID-19 is a highly infectious and contagious disease, and osteopaths should adhere strictly to the guidance signposted at: [osteopathy.org.uk/covid-19](http://osteopathy.org.uk/covid-19). The

Institute of Osteopathy is also providing helpful [advice and guidance for osteopaths](#).

The National Council for Osteopathic Research published a [summary of the current evidence](#) stating: 'There is no current research evidence to indicate that osteopathic manual therapy care can specifically help in the direct treatment of COVID-19 or other types of coronavirus illness.' [Read full statement](#)

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### **NHS welcomes osteopaths**

Osteopaths are being welcomed by the NHS into a range of roles during the current crisis in all four countries of the UK. If you would like to join, or return to, the NHS, you can complete [this NHS survey](#) which is for people who are currently located in the UK.

The aim of the survey is to help identify a role that might be suitable by capturing the areas and locations where people have previously worked, and your personal preferences if called upon, for example if you are willing to work face-to-face or via the phone.

The available roles may vary, from clinical to administrative, for example, so there may be some need for flexibility according to what's needed. But in whatever way you are able to support the NHS at this unprecedented time, your experience and expertise will be highly valued. [Take the survey](#)

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## Looking after your mental health and wellbeing

This is a time of stress and anxiety for everyone and it's vital to take steps to take care of your mental health and wellbeing. Many organisations are making resources such as apps, audio guides and videos available for free to help with this.

The Federation of Small Businesses has compiled [7 short tips](#) to help you check in with yourself for your mental health and wellbeing and the NHS Every Mind Matters site, has a list of [12 practical tips](#) with links to further sources of information and 10-minute videos for exercise work-outs at home.

The BBC has a round-up of [advice and resources](#) from a number of organisations. [Mashable UK](#) lists 7 meditation and mindfulness apps, podcasts and other free tools to help manage coronavirus anxiety, including Headspace, Calm and Ten Percent Happier.

You might also want to join the new Facebook group: [Let'sTalkOsteopathy](#), set up by the professional body, the Institute of Osteopathy, which is providing some community support to help people deal with this crisis. It is open to all osteopaths.

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### If you need to get in touch

Our staff are continuing to work remotely and have limited phone access. If you have any COVID-19 related queries, please email: [covid19@osteopathy.org.uk](mailto:covid19@osteopathy.org.uk). Please note that it may take us a little longer to respond at present, but please bear with us during this time. All your questions are important to us and our staff are working hard to respond as quickly as they can.



Visit the GOsC website at [osteopathy.org.uk](http://osteopathy.org.uk)

The GOsC is a charity registered in England and Wales (1172749).

GOsC's ebulletins contain important information for registrants on maintaining high standards of practice.

Make sure you don't miss out - let us know if you are changing your contact or practice details by emailing: [registration@osteopathy.org.uk](mailto:registration@osteopathy.org.uk)

The below is a standard MailChimp feature, but as a registrant of the GOsC, we have a duty to supply you with the information you need, therefore we would ask that you don't unsubscribe.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

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