



Osteopathic Practice Committee
12 March 2015
Review of the Osteopathic Practice Standards

Classification	Public
Purpose	For discussion
Issue	Reviewing the <i>Osteopathic Practice Standards</i> .
Recommendation	To consider initial implications for the review of the <i>Osteopathic Practice Standards</i> .
Financial and resourcing implications	None directly from this paper.
Equality and diversity implications	Equality and diversity implications will be taken into account as part of the review of the <i>Osteopathic Practice Standards</i> .
Communications implications	Our work on values is being publicised in the Osteopath.
Annex	None
Author	Fiona Browne

Background

1. Our Corporate Plan 2013-16 has three high level strategic objectives for 2013 to 2016. These are:
 - a. To promote public and patient safety through proportionate, targeted and effective regulatory activity
 - b. To encourage and facilitate continuous improvement in the quality of osteopathic healthcare
 - c. To use our resources efficiently and effectively, while adapting and responding to change in the external environment.
2. Our core standards – the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* – feature at the heart of each of these strategic objectives.
3. Our Business Plan 2014-15 states that we will ‘scope [the] review of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* including: key reports and their implications; feedback on the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*; joint work with other regulators; and new methods of engagement (PSA). Establish an outline project plan and governance mechanisms.’
4. This now also features in our 2015-16 Business Plan which states that we will: ‘Scope [the] review of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* including: key reports and their implications (including the Francis report and the duty of candour, and best practice on whistleblowing); feedback on the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*; joint work with other regulators; the effectiveness of regulation research; values based practice activity; and new methods of engagement (PSA). Establish an outline project plan and governance mechanisms.’
5. This paper provides an update about the policy development cycle in relation to the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and next steps. It invites members to discuss our approach and thinking and to provide feedback.

Discussion

6. Our *Osteopathic Practice Standards* are core to each of the three strategic objectives outlined above only if they are the right standards, if osteopaths are aware of the standards, exercise appropriate and informed professional judgement and practise in accordance with the standards.
7. Standards themselves evolve and develop taking into account a variety of different perspectives. For example, changes in society will inform the development of standards. An example of this is the implications of the Francis Report around candour and whistle blowing which will undoubtedly require explicit review as part of the review of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*. There will be a host of other aspects informing the review, not least our recently published research from McGivern G et al, *Exploring and explaining the dynamics*

of osteopathic regulation, professionalism and compliance with standards in practice.

8. Further, our standards do not (and should not) inform a prescriptive set of rules – precisely because contexts of application change. Professional judgement forms an integral part of interpretation and application of standards at any given moment in time and context.
9. The introduction to the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* provides: 'The term 'should' is used in the guidance to indicate how the standard can be met. It is also used where the relevant duty or principle will not apply in all situations or circumstances, or where there may be factors outside the osteopath's control that affect whether or how they comply with the guidance. **The osteopath must use their professional judgement to take a view in light of the circumstances**' (emphasis added – see p3 of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*).
10. Yet, we currently publish very little information about what is meant by 'professional judgement' and how one should exercise it. For example, is it a feeling or an intuition that informs a judgement, ones own experience? Or is it something which is informed more broadly by a range of views and perspectives, for example, patient views, society views, the views of the profession, the views of healthcare professionals more broadly – are these all necessarily the same? What training and support is given to osteopaths to exercise these judgements effectively in accordance with the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and associated guidance and balancing conflict between different perspectives and managing complexity?
11. Both these aspects – standards and the way in which they are applied in practice (in particular contexts and with particular people) – are important in the development of standards and appropriate guidance underpinning it, as well as associated supporting materials, to ensure that we deliver our strategic objectives.
12. Our approach to the development, implementation and evaluation of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* (2012) made great progress in terms of the way that we developed the standards and guidance. The approach took into account, not just the wording used including consideration of the views of a variety of stakeholders and engaging throughout the process of the development and consultation, but also an approach to implementation – awareness and application – which considered the needs of each of our stakeholders and tailored an appropriate approach to each. Traditional methods such as specific articles and guidance and resources were used – but we also used methods that we had not used before, for example e-learning.
13. The *Osteopathic Practice Standards* were published in 2011 and came into force in September 2012.

14. A major implementation plan was developed and implemented with dedicated activities tailored to the needs of each of our stakeholder groups. For example:
- a. Osteopaths – regional conferences focussing in highlighting awareness of the standards and also focussing on expert research and patient presentations around risk and consent, videos (available on YouTube) of these conference presentations, revalidation pilot – completed by more than 5% of registrants which focussed in mapping evidence to each of the 37 standards in the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*, e-learning, direct mailings of both the full standards and also a pocket sized version, online support pages, print articles in the osteopath, telephone and email support.
 - b. CPD providers – meetings with CPD providers to encourage them to link learning outcomes to the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
 - c. Osteopathic Educational Institutions – presentations to senior management and faculty, requirement to map all curricula to the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and to report on this by 1 September 2012, Quality Assurance Visits (involving scrutiny of documentation and triangulation of findings – using different sources of information including meetings with students, staff and others, observation of patient feedback, external examiner reports and quality management documentation). Training was also provided for all the Quality Assurance Visitors on the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
 - d. Osteopathic students – in addition to the mechanisms for teaching students described above under osteopathic educational institutions, we also developed posters for display in teaching and clinic areas to highlight the new *Osteopathic Practice Standards* for students, along with student presentations.
 - e. GOsC Registration Assessors and return to practise reviewers – the assessment process was revised to map against the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and training was provided for all assessors annually both prior to and after the implementation of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*. Appraisal also focussed on CPD to keep up to date with the role which normally includes review of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
 - f. Patients – involvement in consultation. Development and publication of leaflet, *What to expect from your osteopath*, which highlights that osteopaths practise to the standards set out in the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
 - g. Other health professionals – we took steps to ensure that other health professionals were aware of the publication of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* through meetings or through written correspondence with key organisations including the other health regulators, Quality Assurance Agency, UK Health Departments, Professional Standards Authority, Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education. We also published a

leaflet for other health professionals called *Standards of Osteopathic Education* which also highlights the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.

15. We published an evaluation of our approach in February 2013 (available from Fiona Browne at fbrowne@osteopathy.org.uk). We were able to demonstrate that our implementation plan did raise awareness of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* – ways that were particularly successful in raising awareness were the revalidation pilot, regional conferences and the e-learning. Figures showed that the peak rate of use of the additional website resources was during the conferences held in 2012. Since then, use of the website resources has tailed off.
16. However, moving forward, our challenge will be to keep the conversation alive and relevant to osteopaths. Our 2012 approach centred on the standards and their application. There was less about the complicated concept of 'professional judgement' why it is complex, and how one exercises it to comply with the standards in complex clinical situations where there is a need to balance different tensions. It is interesting that the areas which appear to be more successful were those where the complexity was brought out a little more explicitly.

The GOsC work on values

17. We are working closely with Professor Bill Fulford, Professor of Philosophy at St Catherine's College, University of Oxford and Professor Stephen Tyreman, Professor of Osteopathy and Philosophy at the University of Bedfordshire and the British School of Osteopathy, to develop a better understanding of ways in which to interpret, balance and make decisions in situations where values conflict.
18. The background to the seminar began in 2011 and 2012 with our preparedness to practise research undertaken by Professor Della Freeth which, amongst other things, showed strong themes of diversity and isolation among osteopaths.
19. Our ongoing professionalism research in conjunction with Sue Roff shows a range of views about the seriousness of lapses in professionalism or breaches of standards suggesting that standards may be applied inconsistently with varying perspectives about 'seriousness' and 'interpretation'.
20. In November 2013, the GOsC held a seminar with the osteopathic educational institutions about changing professional culture with key note speakers including Stephen Tyreman, Professor of Osteopathy and Philosophy and Hilary Jones, Dean of Health at Staffordshire University. Feedback from the seminar noted that values (either patients or clinicians) were not fully explored in undergraduate osteopathic education and that there was a need to better understand values as they relate to the interpretation of standards.
21. These findings and views, have also been considered with themes arising from the environment around us, for example, the importance of person centred care,

the culture change as recognised in the Francis and the Berwick reviews, along with the independent and sometimes isolated nature of osteopathic practice. Consideration of these has led us to the view that further discussion about the explicit values underpinning the interpretation of standards is important as we consider our review of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.

22. We discussed these ideas with Professor Tyreman and Professor Bill Fulford, a doctor and expert in values based practice over the course of 2014 and, together, developed an exploratory seminar with a wide variety of stakeholders to develop some thinking in this area.
23. The desired outcome of this seminar was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to better understand and debate the nature of osteopathic values to support commencement of more detailed work ultimately to enhance patient care.
24. We held a seminar in November 2014, chaired by Harry Cayton, Chief Executive of the Professional Standards Authority which was attended by around 35 participants including osteopaths, patients and the public, academics, health professionals and regulators. The seminar comprised background sessions from Tim Walker and Brigid Tucker about osteopathy and research on patient views. Professor Bill Fulford, Professor Stephen Tyreman and Fiona Browne facilitated interactive discussion sessions and presentations to give all a chance to discuss and debate the nature of values in osteopathic practice.
25. The morning sessions focussed on the discussing and developing values and developing a common framework. In the afternoon sessions, participants explored their values, and the common frameworks developed, to interpret and discuss some case studies in groups. The responses to the case studies were very interesting as they illustrated both a tension and a balance in the discussion that could be worked through in more detail.
26. A detailed field note , the flip chart notes and the case studies referred to in the field note are available on request from Fiona Browne at fbrowne@osteopathy.org.uk
27. Feedback from the seminar was extremely positive. All participants found the seminar useful and wanted to continue to be involved.
28. Our next seminar is being held on 20 May 2015 at St Catherine's College, University of Oxford. This seminar will focus broadly on two areas:
 - a. Exploring the tensions arising in the clinical case studies in more detail – making more explicit both the areas of agreement, but also the tensions.
 - b. Understanding more clearly this concept of the 'professional judgement' and how we support the interpretation of standards in order to inform 'professional judgement' – i.e. understanding more about the 'whys' of the standards.

29. This work is still in early development, but it is our intention to learn from our stakeholders with a view to supporting a broader scope about the development of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* towards the end of 2016.

Next steps

30. It is our intention to further develop our thinking, in partnership with our stakeholders before developing the scope of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*. It will be important that the scope focusses on the development of the right standards and guidance, an implementation plan which supports understanding about 'why' standards are there and 'how' they can be applied in the complexity of clinical practice along with an effective evaluation strategy which is planned in at the beginning of the project.

Date	Action
March 2015 to December 2015	Develop discourse with stakeholders about values and professional judgements.
January to March 2016	Develop scope and governance for the review of the <i>Osteopathic Practice Standards</i> for the Business Year 2016-17.

31. The Committee is invited to consider our initial thinking and development of a scope of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and to provide advice and feedback.

Recommendation: to consider initial implications for the review of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.