

Osteopathic Regional Communications Network

Friday 3 October 2014

Runnymede Hotel, Egham, Surrey

ODG Project title: Evidence – development of a Patient Reported Outcome Measurement (PROM) facility for osteopaths

Activity to date:

The development of a facility to collect Patient Reported Outcome Measurement (PROM) data in osteopathic practices is a key element of the ODG Evidence development project, and is being led by the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR).

The early stages of the project involved a systematic review of the literature, particularly looking at the measurement properties of different PROMs. There followed two qualitative studies, involving both patients and osteopaths, to explore attitudes to collecting outcome data in practice, and looking at a range of validated PROMs to get feedback on their suitability in an osteopathic setting. NCOR is looking to devise a way of capturing patient outcome data electronically, using an app. The research conducted to date has had been for the purpose of informing development of content for a PROM app that is appropriate for application in osteopathic practice.

Consultation and engagement with the profession and others to date:

To date, focus groups and individual interviews have been conducted involving 30 osteopaths, and interviews have taken place involving 22 patients throughout the United Kingdom. The findings of both of these parts of the project will form the basis for publications. It has been recommended that the findings from the osteopathic focus groups and interviews should be tested with chiropractors and physiotherapists. Contact has been made with both professional groups to try and identify their views on PROMs.

Piloting the app

Considerable testing of the app took place before involving private practices with osteopathic patients. A refined version of the app is now being used to test key issues, including:

- the feasibility of using a PROM data collection system in practice
- the reliability of the PROM when used in an electronic system
- the responsiveness of the PROMs in an osteopathic patient population, i.e. how well it can detect change in patients' symptoms as they receive treatment.

Piloting has also taken place at some of the Osteopathic Educational Institutions, with further Institutions indicating a desire to participate. A total of 15 osteopaths have agreed to now pilot the app in their practices. Some volunteers have withdrawn after discussing the project, on the basis that they don't think their patients will wish to participate; it can be argued that it is important to let osteopathic patients decide for themselves whether they want to be involved.

Comments from patients using the app in the clinic have helpfully identified where there is a need for further questions or clearer questions. Testing and observing the patient experience of completing the electronic health questionnaire, using a tablet, has been important to identify and address practical challenges. Evidence of some operator error where patients have accessed the app out of the clinic setting, via the website, has also helped to shape improvements.

Next steps and planned activities:

We will continue to pilot the app until we reach a certain number of completed data sets. Once we have this data, analysis will begin and it will be possible to feedback summary data to osteopaths who have been involved in the pilot.

How you can get involved:

We would like to hear from more volunteer practices interested in piloting the app. We provide training for willing osteopaths and we will ask you to collect data from 15 current patients.

Contact details:

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