



General
Osteopathic
Council

Regional Communications Network meeting: 15 March 2013

Working groups and plenary discussion

Q1. What infrastructure does an effective regional group need?

- A self-supporting support hub for osteopaths, to be defined by its members

Leadership

- Chair/Treasurer roles
- Coordination/leadership – one or two people
- Appointed roles held for a set timeframe, with succession planning
- Strategy for involving members to become and remain involved
- Supported with 'starter pack' for how to set up a group

Membership

- Strategy for refreshing membership, targeting 'unengaged', reaching newcomers to the region, osteopaths new to practice
- Include students in membership (charge?) to provide realistic idea about practice and offer potential employment opportunities
- Open to other professions?
- Formal v. no formal membership
- Access to details of osteopaths across regions – GOsC help?
- Database of skills within membership – recognising osteopaths may be on their second or third careers
- Subgroup to lead mentoring
- Subgroup for professional support

Meetings

- Small meetings hosted in local practices more frequently; larger regional meetings less frequently (c. 3-6 meetings a year)
- Open to students (and other healthcare professionals by invitation)
- Online meetings/skype – especially for developing ideas/collective responses to GOsC consultations, etc

- Close/easy location, good venue and good parking
- Free rooms in hospitals/speakers/food
- Duration: whole day, afternoons, or evening (c. 2 hours)?

Topics

- Use survey monkey to find out what osteopaths want to see/do
- CPD – not only about courses
- Shared Resources/Speakers Database: e.g. speakers that other groups have used with feedback (good or bad)

Finances

- Financially independent
- Baseline fee for everyone, with extra fee for CPD?
- Annual membership fee – reserves used to support supplementary activities and resources for use by members
- No fee – pay per event (book in advance)
- Link up with other groups to cover costs for more expensive speakers

Communication to members and others

- Central point of contact – email group
- Regular member communication (e.g. every 6-8 weeks via letter/email)
- Link to other regional groups
- Website best option to communicate group activities and attract members, provide information
- Online calendar of events: booking system, who attending
- Good links with osteopathic educational institutions (OEs) and national groups to share expertise and access to speakers/lectures

Q2. What services and support should a regional group provide?

- Information hub for osteopaths, separate to GOsC

CPD

- Large group lectures / small group activities
- Discussions easier in small groups (e.g. mentoring, 'buddying'). Smaller groups possibly falling under umbrella of larger group
- Foster 'safe' supportive environment for personal development
- Interactive
- Case studies

Peer support

- Mentoring; shadowing; buddying
- How to become aware of new graduates to the area? (GOsC promotes the RCN to final year students and all RCN contact details on o zone)
- Opportunity to talk to peers about concerns/uncertainty, before going to GOsC with concerns
- Advertising/NHS contracting etc – perhaps more achievable through collaboration between practices, within larger groups of practitioners
- Source for locums/referrals/job vacancies
- Regional societies to identify osteopaths with particular needs/interests (e.g. mentoring, leadership, CPD areas, business advice, marketing) to provide peer support
- Sharing contacts between regional groups, including speakers – good and bad

Networking

- Networking – between osteopaths and other healthcare professionals
- Avoid perception of competition among profession, providing uncompetitive environment. Collaboration potentially more productive than competition.

Other

- Should groups have a mission statement?
- Must be fun!

Q3. How can the regional groups, BOA and GOsC work better together to:

- **Help groups flourish?**
- **Support the development of the profession?**
- **Ensure effective engagement between osteopaths, the BOA and GOsC?**

➤ GOsC/BOA support and training

Structure

- Groups to decide their own form and function vs. centrally defined regions and role?

Activities

- National CPD 'needs analysis' – GOsC to provide?
- Not just CPD, e.g. mentoring (training?)

Online communications

- Support how to use social media
- Help with website development for groups
- Single web portal for the regions?
- Training on uploading information to website and other activities
- Access to webinars
- Access to OEI talks

Promotional support that could be offered by osteopathic organisations

- Photos for promotional material
- Powerpoint presentation templates
- Promotion of regional group events via news e-bulletins and on ● zone
- Support on how to get speakers/organise talks
- Promote group to osteopaths and other healthcare professionals
- Opportunities to present to students at OEIs