



General
Osteopathic
Council

Leaving the Register

A guide for osteopaths retiring from practice

About this guide

We have produced this guide to assist members of the profession who are planning to leave the Register.

Based on the most common questions from osteopaths, this publication contains information about informing the GOsC, your patients and others of your intention to leave the Register. It also sets out what to do with your patient records and the steps to take to avoid any potential misuse of the title 'osteopath', along with useful contact details.

If you have any queries or suggestions for improvement, please do get in touch.

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Notifications

1. General Osteopathic Council

If you would like to resign/retire from the Register, please complete and send via post or email the 'Leaving the Register' form that can be found on the **o** zone at: <https://members.osteopathy.org.uk/my-registration/registration/leaving-the-register/>. You will need to provide the following:

- your full name
- registration number
- current contact address
- your reason for leaving the Register.

The form can be scanned and emailed to registration@osteopathy.org.uk or alternatively can be sent to:

Registration Department
General Osteopathic Council
Osteopathy House
176 Tower Bridge Road
London
SE1 3LU

On the date that you wish to leave the Register, your record will be updated with your request and a letter of confirmation will be sent to you.

If you pay your fees by direct debit, we will not collect any future payments from your account once your details have been updated on the Register. However, if you have paid your fees in full, you will need to request a refund by contacting the Registration Department at: registration@osteopathy.org.uk

2. Employer

You should review your existing employment arrangements (or seek legal advice) to ensure that on retiring you are meeting all of your obligations concerning your employer.

3. Patients

It is important that your patients are advised of your retirement in time to allow them to make alternative arrangements for their ongoing care. This will include all patients who are currently under your care and those who you have consulted in the past (see Patient notes below).

You should notify your patients via email or letter (including a consent form with options for requesting and transferring their notes to a new practitioner) advising the following:

- the date you will cease practice
- any plans you have made to sell your practice
- options for their ongoing care
- how they can arrange for the transfer of their records to another practitioner.

If some patients do not respond to your request, you should make arrangements for their patient notes to be kept securely.

4. Indemnity insurance provider

You will need to contact your indemnity insurer to update them that you are no longer registered and that you have 'run-off'¹ cover in place. This will ensure that in the event of a claim made against you retrospectively, you will still be covered by insurance.

5. Private medical insurance

If you are registered with any private medical insurance provider (e.g. BUPA, AXA PPP), you will need to contact them to update your registration status to ensure any treatment claims for osteopathy after your retirement date will not be processed.

6. Other associations/bodies

Consider whether your details need to be amended with your professional association or bodies (regional osteopathic group, postgraduate providers).

7. Financial matters

Advise creditors of your impending retirement and finalise outstanding accounts.

8. *the osteopath*

If you no longer wish to receive copies of *the osteopath* when you retire, please contact the editor at: editor@osteopathy.org.uk otherwise a copy will automatically be sent to you.

¹ Run-off cover will cover the cost of defending any claim made against those insured and will reimburse the losses occurring should the claim be upheld.

What to do with ...?

1. Patient notes

The guidance in *Osteopathic Practice Standards* says:

D6 2-5

2. Patients are entitled to see their notes and you should assist them with this if such a request is made.
3. You should have adequate and secure methods for storing patient information and records. Patient records should be kept:
 - 3.1. For a minimum of eight years after their last consultation.
 - 3.2. If the patient is a child, until their 25th birthday.
4. You should make arrangements for records to continue to be kept safely after you finish practising, or in the event of your death. Patients should know how they can access their records in such circumstances.
5. You must comply with the law on data protection. For further information on data protection, please refer to the website of the UK Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/>)

If your practice is closing, records should be securely stored where they are protected from damage, loss, or theft and can be retrieved easily if necessary.

Where the practice continues in your absence, your records may be securely retained at the practice's premises; however, it is recommended that you negotiate continuing rights of access in the event that a complaint or claim arises regarding your treatment.

Written consent forms to release copies of patient notes to a new treating practitioner, or to the patient directly where appropriate, must be obtained from each patient and filed in the patient's records with a copy of any associated correspondence. If some patients do not respond to your request, you should make arrangements for their patient notes to be kept securely.

For storage of electronic health records, you may need to liaise with the software company to maintain your software licence for future access to the records as required.

When destroying health records, you must ensure that the method you use is effective, and does not compromise confidentiality. Incineration, pulping, and shredding are appropriate methods of destroying manual records. Electronic data should be destroyed using appropriate data destruction software.

2. *Statement of Fitness for Work and Forms of consent to approach a patient's healthcare practitioner*

Ensure that all unused *Statement of Fitness for Work* and *Forms of consent to approach a patient's healthcare practitioner* (if you have either of them) are disposed of securely.

3. GOsC ID Card and Certificate of Registration

You will need to return your certificate of registration, including any duplicates you hold and your ID card (if you have one) to the GOsC Registration Department within 28 days after your retirement date.

4. Selling your practice

We regret we cannot provide advice on selling your practice. Instead you should contact either the Institute of Osteopathy or seek other professional advice.

Promotional material

Review your website and any informational (such as business directories), promotional, or advertising material to ensure no references to your name imply you are an osteopath when you retire. Section 32 (1) of the *Osteopaths Act 1993* makes it a criminal offence for a person to describe themselves as an osteopath in the UK unless registered with the GOsC.

The *Osteopaths Act* restricts the following titles:

- osteopath
- osteopathic practitioner
- osteopathic physician
- osteopathist
- osteotherapist.

The GOsC undertakes monitoring activity to ensure compliance with Section 32 is met.

To remove your name from search engines:

- contact the site or sites that have this information posted, ask them to remove it
- contact the hosting company and try to get the account disabled
- use Google site removal tool, https://support.google.com/legal/contact/lr_eudpa?product=websearch, to remove URLs from search results.

Useful contact details

1. General Osteopathic Council

Registration

☎ x229/256

registration@osteopathy.org.uk

Practice matters

☎ x224

regulation@osteopathy.org.uk

the osteopath

☎ x222

editor@osteopathy.org.uk

2. Institute of Osteopathy

☎ 01582 488 455

enquiries@osteopathy.org

3. Professional Indemnity Insurers

Balens Insurance Brokers

☎ 01684 580 771

www.balens.co.uk

Institute of Osteopathy

☎ 01582 488 455

www.osteopathy.org

Howdens Insurance Brokers

☎ 020 7623 3806

www.howdenins.co.uk

Three Counties Insurance

☎ 01789 204 803

www.insurancedataservices.co.uk

Towergate Medical Insurance Agency (MIA)

☎ 01438 739 777

www.towergate.co.uk

4. Information Commissioner's Office

☎ 0303 123 1113

<https://ico.org.uk/>

**We hope you find this guide useful.
If you have any queries or suggestions for improvement please contact us.**

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176 Tower Bridge Road
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www.osteopathy.org.uk



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