



Osteopathic International Alliance · 142 E. Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611 USA

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Osteopathy and osteopathic medicine make a significant healthcare contribution

Osteopathy and osteopathic medicine are making a significant contribution to global healthcare with the osteopathic profession now established in over 50 countries, according to a new report released by the Osteopathic International Alliance (OIA) at its annual conference in Austin, Texas on 12 January 2014.

The report – *Osteopathy and Osteopathic Medicine – a Global View of Practice, Patients, Education and the Contribution to Healthcare Delivery* – was commissioned by the OIA with consultation from the World Health Organization (WHO) as an initiative to document the growing significance of osteopathic healthcare worldwide. The WHO also contributed a foreword to the report.

The report is presented in four parts: the concept, history and spread of osteopathic healthcare; practitioners, patients and the scale of osteopathic practice; models of education and regulation; and efficacy, safety and cost-effectiveness. It brings together data from a range of international sources including a survey of international practice and a census of covering 33 countries.

- The opening chapter on concept, history and spread of osteopathic healthcare charts how the two different streams of the profession – osteopaths and osteopathic physicians – have emerged both working with a shared paradigm of osteopathic healthcare.
- The chapter on practitioners and patients identifies that there are now at least 87,000 osteopathic physicians and 43,000 osteopaths working in over fifty countries. It also identifies the continuing significant growth of both streams of the profession around the world. Data from an OIA practitioner survey, and other national surveys and research, identifies patient demographics, patient pathways, presenting health complaints, and treatment modalities for both osteopaths and osteopathic physicians.
- The chapter on models of education and training sets out the increasing depth and breadth of osteopathic education and training including the osteopathic physician model with full medical practice rights and the osteopath model with a growing move towards Master's level educational qualifications. The chapter also explores the variety of current and emerging regulatory and recognition models around the world, including scope of practice and the maintenance of registration or licensure.
- The final chapter explores the evidence that exists for the efficacy, safety and cost effectiveness of osteopathic healthcare including the available evidence on the outcomes of osteopathic

techniques. The chapter concludes with the acknowledgement of the osteopathic profession that more research is needed.

Commenting on the launch of the report, Michael Mulholland-Licht, Chair of the OIA Board said:

“This report is the culmination of several years of work by the osteopathic profession to seek to demonstrate the profession’s international contribution to healthcare delivery. We hope by publishing such a wide-ranging report that national and international health policy makers will come to recognise the scale of osteopathic practice and the significant contribution it could make to health around the globe.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The report *Osteopathy and Osteopathic Medicine – a Global View of Practice, Patients, Education and the Contribution to Healthcare Delivery* is available to download at www.oialliance.org
2. The Osteopathic International Alliance (OIA) is the international organisation representing national and international osteopathic bodies and their osteopath and osteopathic physician members worldwide. Its 71 members consist of professional associations, regulators, osteopathic schools and other osteopathic organisations.
3. For more information about the OIA, its work and the report please contact: OIA@osteopathic.org.