

Australian Statement of Scope of Practice in Osteopathy

Australian Osteopathy Association
Antony Nicholas, Chief Executive Officer

Scope of Practice in Australia

- * Can be defined by the regulator under the National Law [Div.3 Section 38(2)b].
- * It is not a requirement and the regulator has chosen not to define.
- * The AOA is pleased the OBA have not, as the profession should lead and define itself.
- * Scope is also defined by the core competencies outlined in University accreditation standards that all graduates must meet.
- * Those against Scope development, fail to understand that the osteopathic scope already exists, just not in one document.

Development process

- * Over the last two plus years the AOA has been undertaking a wide range of consultations.
- * Discussion with our members and held meetings with key stakeholders both within Australia and abroad regarding scope of practice.
- * We also undertook a review of Scopes from abroad and in other professions
- * Discussed in many meetings, telephone calls and debates across the country and via conferences, webinar and we want to thank the hundreds of members who have engaged.
- * The scope of practice statement was launched at at our 2013 Annual General Meeting on the Gold Coast.

Development process

- * This well-known phrase of a sometimes intangible concept can be confusing, confronting and is downright challenging too many osteopaths.
- * The AOA firmly believes that the profession should own and lead the development of its scope of practice statement.
- * This is an important development for the profession and helps osteopathy to define itself, not letting others do it for us.
- * It is important to remember; however, that scope documents are not for osteopaths but for others to conceptualise osteopathy within healthcare.

“A comfort zone is a beautiful place, but nothing ever grows there.”

Scope Debate in Australia

- * Osteopathy is a weak brand - we need a USP
- * Osteopathic skills set is poorly defined or understood
- * Need to stake a claim for Osteopaths and their role in the healthcare system.
- * Field of manual medicine is already crowded.
- * Osteopathy is defined by its philosophy not technique.
- * The formless **no scope** scope of practice is not serving us well.
- * The formless scope or a restricted scope statement is a form of prohibition.

Scope Debate in Australia

- *Techniques vs philosophy
- *Evidenced based vs Belief - based / experiential
- *Structural vs Cranial
- *Totality belief system vs healthcare profession
- *CAM vs Manual Medicine
- *Personal / Professional SoP - Differentiated
- *Evolution or Extinction?
- *Modernising = Medicalising?

Professions perspective

- * Osteopathic invisibility / Professional Identity
- * ACCORB / ANZOC accreditation standards focused on educational inputs not outcomes. What are we training people to do?
- * Osteopathy is a maturing and diversified profession
- * No clear relationship between training pathways and clinical interest in practice
- * Lack of career pathways
- * How would a patient / referring healthcare professional find a paediatric osteopath? Sports osteopath?

Professions perspective

- * 40% of AOA members are using needling techniques in practice without standards / minimum training requirements being determined
- * Credentialling / Clinical Interest Groups
- * Clinical complexity
- * Generational Change
- * Osteopathy at a junctional point - where to next?
- * AOA-USA - Manual Therapy SoP Plus?

AOA Scope Framework

- * Patient centred
- * Credentialling processes / Clinical Interest Groups
- * Personal / Professional SoP
- * Title / Recognition of Advanced Standing
- * Informative to other Healthcare Professionals
- * Broadly defined Osteopathic Scope
- * Allows acquisition / incorporation of PG learning
- * Inclusive but

**We don't grow
when things
are easy;
we grow when
we face
challenges.**

rawforbeauty.com



Statement of Scope of Practice in Osteopathy



Osteopaths are committed to effective, patient-centred healthcare. As the scientific understanding of health and disease evolves, this Scope of Practice Statement will require on-going revision.

This statement is for health professionals, third party funders and policy makers. It gives an overview of osteopathic practice and its place within the Australian healthcare system.

This statement has been developed by the Australian Osteopathic Association (AOA) in alignment with The Osteopathic Service Descriptors¹, The Capabilities for Osteopathic Practice², the Code of Conduct for Registered Health Practitioners³ and the World Health Organisation Benchmark Statement on Osteopathic Education⁴. The statement is further influenced by broader health policies, legislation, regulation and health workforce debate.

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An Overview of Osteopathy

Osteopaths are autonomous primary contact practitioners who treat patients from across the life span. 90% of patients access osteopathic care without a referral. Osteopaths have a professional focus on conditions affecting the neuro-musculoskeletal system and the management of pain.

Osteopathy is a system of diagnosis and treatment that recognises the following principles:

- the body is one unit of function
- the body has self-regulating mechanisms
- structure and function are reciprocally inter-related
- therapeutic management is applied with an understanding of these principles and a thorough knowledge of clinical sciences.

These osteopathic principles, in conjunction with current medical knowledge, inform the care given to patients. Scientific plausibility and evidence-informed reasoning are fundamental to diagnosis, treatment and care management.

Osteopaths follow these principles of patient care:

- 1: The patient is the focus for healthcare
- 2: The patient has the primary responsibility for their own health
- 3: Effective treatment is founded on these principles and:

- incorporates evidence informed guidelines
- optimises the patients natural healing capacity
- seeks to address the primary cause of disease, and
- emphasizes health maintenance and disease prevention.

Our document covers:

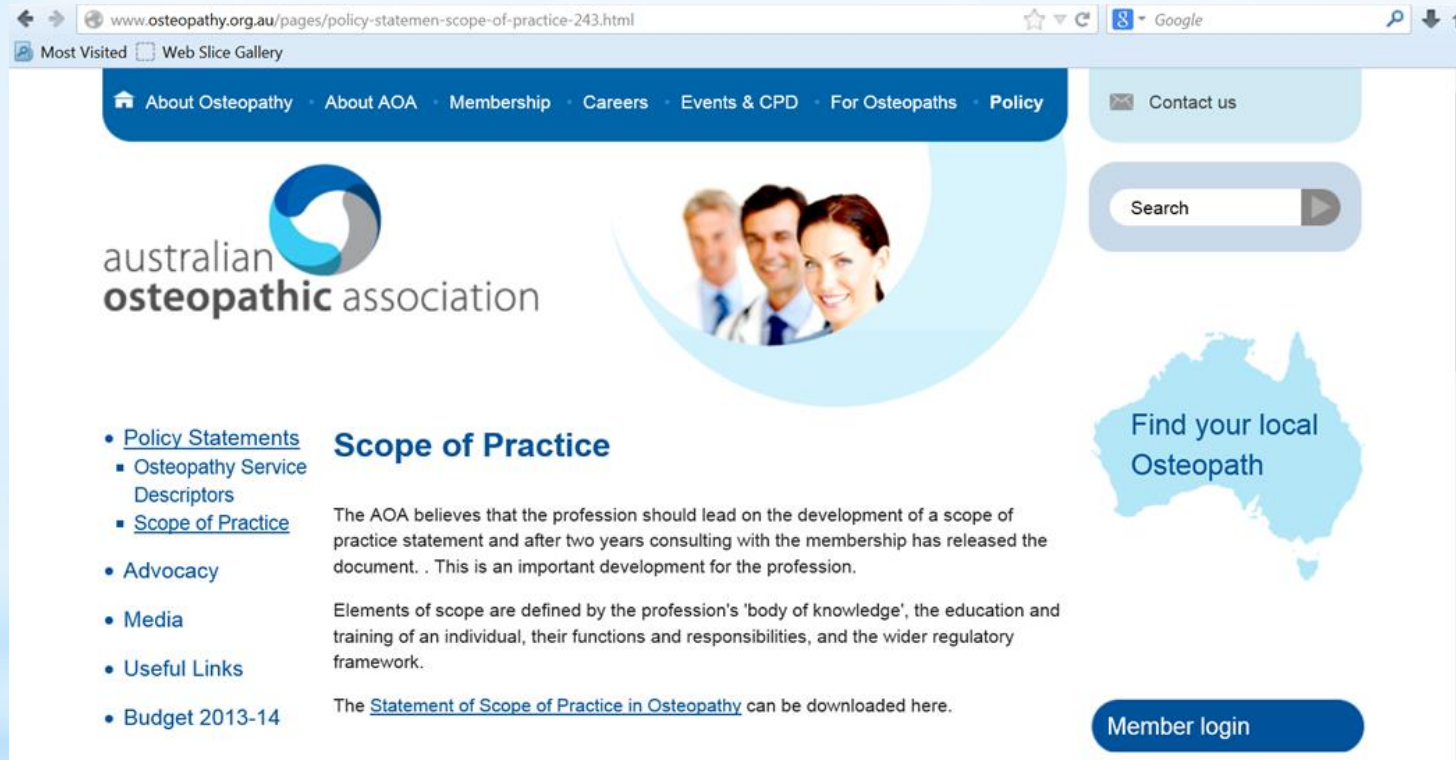
- * A preamble on how the document sits with a range of regulatory frameworks, clinical or funding guidelines.
- * An overview of osteopathy principles and clinical practice.
- * A brief overview of regulation, education and continuing professional developments.
- * Advanced Clinical Standing and further credentialing
- * Osteopathy within the Australian healthcare systems and more broadly globally.

Osteopaths are committed to effective patient-centred healthcare. As the scientific understanding of health and disease evolves, this Scope of Practice Statement will require ongoing revision.

The emphasis on the neuromusculoskeletal system as integral to the body's function, a person's health and to patient care is a defining characteristic of osteopathy.

Osteopaths understand the wider healthcare environment and the role of the primary care practitioner within the healthcare system.

<http://www.osteopathy.org.au/pages/policy-statement-scope-of-practice-243.html>



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Australian Osteopathic Association's website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: www.osteopathy.org.au/pages/policy-statement-scope-of-practice-243.html. The website features a blue navigation bar with links: About Osteopathy, About AOA, Membership, Careers, Events & CPD, For Osteopaths, and Policy. A 'Contact us' button is also visible. The main content area includes the AOA logo, a circular image of three smiling people, and a search bar. The 'Scope of Practice' section is highlighted, with a list of links on the left and a map of Australia on the right.

australian osteopathic association

[Policy Statements](#)

- [Osteopathy Service Descriptors](#)
- [Scope of Practice](#)

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Scope of Practice

The AOA believes that the profession should lead on the development of a scope of practice statement and after two years consulting with the membership has released the document. . This is an important development for the profession.

Elements of scope are defined by the profession's 'body of knowledge', the education and training of an individual, their functions and responsibilities, and the wider regulatory framework.

The [Statement of Scope of Practice in Osteopathy](#) can be downloaded here.

[Find your local Osteopath](#)

[Member login](#)

The aim of CIG

The purpose of the clinical interest groups (CIG) is to support members' CPD needs; career development aspirations; provide a mechanism for osteopaths to 'credential' their skills sets and to complement the scope of practice advanced standing objectives.

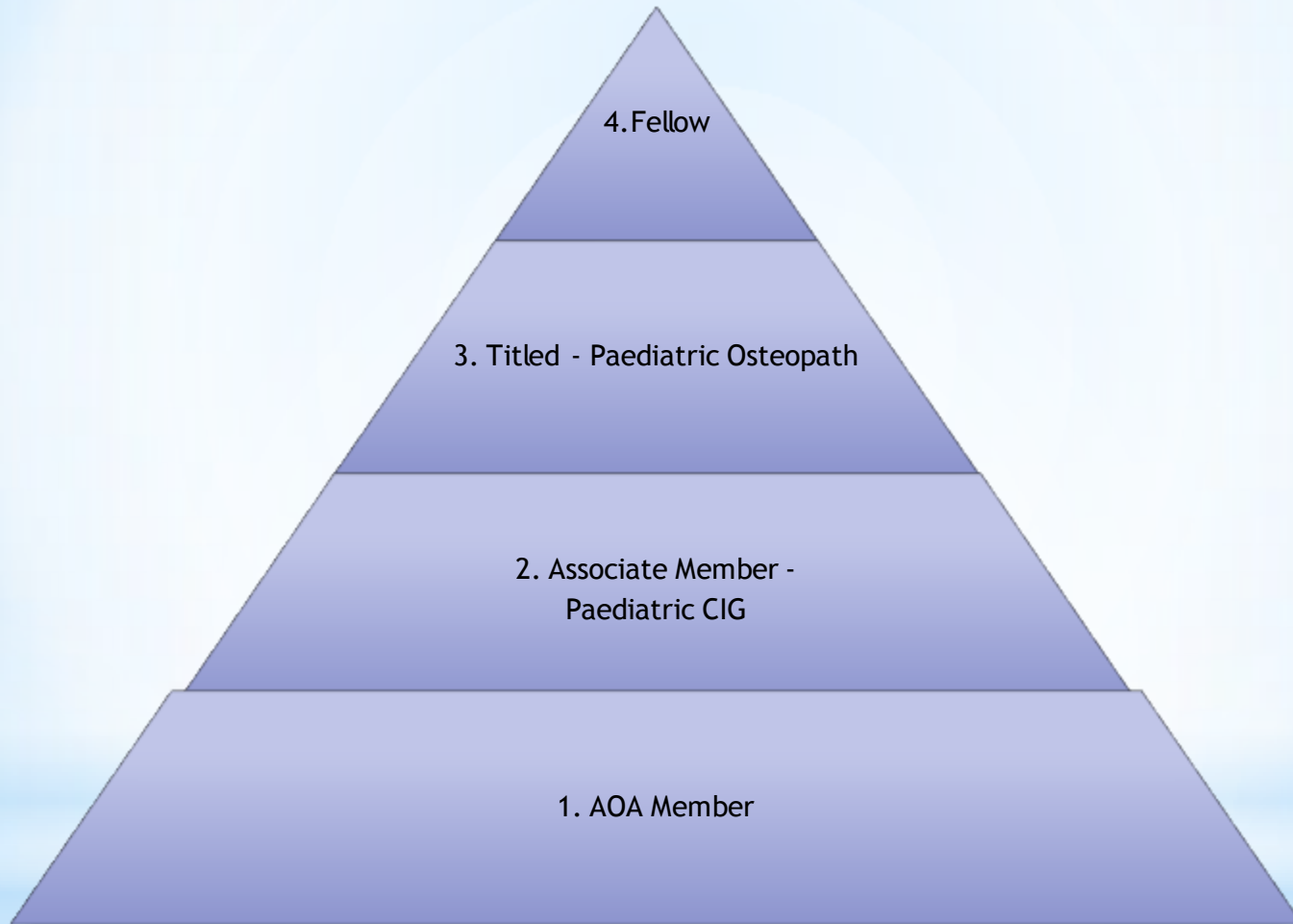
The aim of CIG

In the foreseeable future it is unlikely that osteopathy will have endorsements or specialist registration in Australia.

The CIG are the first step on the path to developing sufficient differentiation and/or specialisation in practice to merit endorsements on osteopathic registration.

AOA Clinical Interest Groups

- * Needling techniques in Osteopathic Practice
- * Child / Infant Health
- * Gerontology
- * Occupational Health / Rehabilitation
- * Pain Management
- * Sports Medicine



Questions?

Australian Osteopathy Association

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