

Osteopathy - Profession specific descriptor for registered professionals and support workers

Osteopaths care for people of all ages and believe that everyone can benefit from a whole-person approach to health. As highly trained Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), Osteopaths evaluate, diagnose and manage physiology associated with the entire musculoskeletal system and its relationship with other systems in the body. They design and provide a package of care that is tailored to individual needs, including manual therapy, rehabilitation exercises, screening and general health advice.

Wider Determinants

Osteopaths specialising in paediatric care work with children to support them with their needs and in doing so, promote the best start in life for the child and support wider access to education, social activities, and other areas of life.

Health Improvement

Osteopaths include Making Every Contact Count (MECC) in their practice. Part of the philosophy of Osteopathy is to consider the general health of an individual and so osteopaths will talk about the general health of a person as part of a consultation. They often talk to service users about health topics like weight management, the importance of physical activity, smoking cessation, stress management, and sleep hygiene. They promote general good health while equipping service users with the information they need to manage their health and condition beyond the work done during therapy. As part of this, they practice social prescribing and will refer service users to other campaigns which might benefit their health e.g., NHS campaigns and 'Couch to 5k'.

Nutrition training is included in the Osteopathy undergraduate course and in postgraduate training, thus, Osteopaths can provide information about accessing suitable nutrition to promote good general health.

Population Healthcare

Osteopaths are involved with the delivery of *Arthritis Action*, a self-management initiative where Osteopaths and Physiotherapists provide public health and self-management advice to people living with the symptoms of arthritis. The scheme includes the importance of physical activity, and weight management, motivating participants to self-manage their condition, and providing support in managing psychosocial factors associated with arthritis. Similar work takes place with *Age Concern* to provide health support for this population.

The Institute of Osteopathy regularly runs public health awareness events (for example, smoking awareness), to raise awareness of certain conditions.

Health Protection

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Osteopaths have worked within the COVID-19 vaccination teams.