

Osteopathic Communities of Practice

Setting up and sustaining a vibrant peer group

A practical guide to establishing and sustaining vibrant professional communities that facilitate collaboration, learning and support.

This 'live' resource is compiled and maintained by the Institute of Osteopathy and the General Osteopathic Council as an Osteopathic Development Group collaborative project, drawing on the shared experiences of osteopathic groups across the UK.

Your feedback on this resource is welcomed, along with suggestions for improvement – please email comments to katie@osteopathy.org



***Osteopathic organisations working together
for the development of the profession***

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Introduction

Have you considered volunteering to run a local professional group or network? Or to start one, if there is nothing in your region or range of interest and you think there is a need for representation?

You have probably wondered “what’s in it for me?” Helping to develop and run a peer group can undoubtedly be demanding – but don’t overlook the many benefits that you may discover both personally and professionally if you, whether alone or with others, step up to the plate.

This guide aims to provide information and advice on what to consider when forming a shared interest group, suggestions to help it thrive, and we point you in the direction of support that is available to aid your efforts.

What is a community of practice?

A community of practice is usually a group of people who share a common professional interest and come together to fulfil both individual and group goals. Communities of practice often focus on sharing best practice and seeking new knowledge to advance an aspect of professional practice. One could argue that regional osteopathic groups have been doing this for some time, but communities don’t have to work only in a common location – they can be a much wider network of practitioners with a shared interest, operating perhaps online and across healthcare disciplines. What is important, however, is regular interaction and knowledge exchange with professional colleagues.

Why a community of osteopathic practice?

Building a community

Increasingly, in the demanding world of work, it’s not just what you know but also *who* you know that can make a difference. For osteopaths, access to a community of colleagues who have the shared experience of training and working in osteopathy (and elsewhere in healthcare) can offer an invaluable network of professional and personal support. This may be particularly so for osteopaths who work largely alone, either as sole practitioners or in remote areas, and for those new to osteopathic practice.

A community of osteopathic practice can:

- **Connect people:** provide an opportunity for osteopaths to interact with colleagues and benefit from professional networking and shared social activities.
- **Provide a shared context:** for osteopaths to communicate and share information, stories and personal experiences in a way that builds understanding and insight.
- **Enable dialogue:** between osteopaths and others to solve problems and create new, mutually beneficial opportunities.

- **Stimulate learning:** by serving as a vehicle for authentic communication, mentoring, coaching, self-reflection, and inter-professional exchange.
- **Capture and diffuse existing knowledge:** to help people improve their practice by providing a forum to identify solutions to common problems and a process to collect and evaluate good practice.
- **Introduce collaborative processes:** to foster the free flow of ideas, information, knowledge and skills between individuals, groups and organisations.
- **Generate new knowledge:** to help people transform their practice to accommodate changes in needs and technologies.
- **Serve as a CPD hub:** providing a forum for peer discussion and sharing clinical expertise.
- **Offer a facility for peer discussion and review:** to support the new, enhanced CPD scheme.
- **Act as a peer support network:** for sharing and seeking advice on clinical and service delivery issues.
- **Provide a trusted network:** for the safe referral of patients, ensuring cover for colleagues on vacation or sick leave.
- **Coordinate joint business development activities:** that promote local osteopathic services, e.g. advertising/media, NHS service strategies, data collection collaboration.
- **Support and mentor osteopaths:** new to practice and new to the area.
- **Represent the interests of the osteopathic profession/professionals:** e.g. in relation to national political/policy developments, e.g. Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar.

Supporting your development

While setting up an osteopathic network no doubt involves a great deal of work, it can offer opportunities for your own development, both personally and professionally:

- **Networking:** leading a group is a great opportunity to network both within and outside the profession, and to be seen as a senior member of the profession.
- **Leadership:** this could offer the opportunity for you to formally develop your leadership skills. The Osteopathic Development Group, in conjunction with the Open University, launched in 2015 a recognised training course for osteopaths. The course is proving very popular and your experience of leading such a professional network will strengthen your application to enrol on the course. For more information on Leadership training visit www.osteodevelopment.org.uk
- **Career skills:** enrich your osteopathic and business expertise by honing a wide range of other invaluable professional and personal skills, such as:
 - Communication and organisational skills
 - Diplomacy and media management – by working with local and regional journalists
 - Improving your writing skills – by producing press releases, writing for the web or newsletter editing

- Chairmanship, presentation and public speaking skills
- Increase your IT knowledge through developing websites, social media marketing and database management.
- **Satisfaction** – “Giving something back” can benefit you personally and professionally. Many practitioners tell us that they derive great satisfaction from being able to help advance the profession.
- **Mentoring** – An area of huge importance. Helping new osteopaths to develop is immensely rewarding, and will help you grow too, as you reflect on the skills needed to be successful in your professional life.
- **Recognition** – The contribution that osteopathic groups make, for example, is recognised by the [Institute of Osteopathy’s Awards](#), a highlight of the [iO Convention](#). Osteopathic groups are invited to nominate for an award leaders who are making a real contribution to the osteopathic community.

Getting started

When thinking about forming a community of practice, there are number of questions worth asking about what you and members want to get out of the group, and matters that you will need to consider in its management.

First steps

- Who is this for? Investigate what other groups exist already – what is the gap you wish to fill? Decide your catchment area – is it your aim to serve a region (e.g. Birmingham osteopaths), create a shared interest group (e.g. animal osteopathy) or bring together alumni from your education provider? What is the community's common interest?
- Poll colleagues to gauge their interest in a new group – you could ring around or [talk to the GOsC](#) about assistance with an email to all osteopaths in your locality. Alternatively you could contact osteopaths you already know and set up a community that way.
- Talk to osteopaths to identify those that may be willing to assist you in setting up and running the group. The most successful and sustainable groups are those run by a team of osteopaths working together.
- Find out what members want – interaction with a wider network of peers is sufficient reason for some to want to be part of a professional community. What kind of activities will generate energy and support in your group? How will members communicate on an ongoing basis? What are the learning goals of the community? How can collaborative learning be supported? What are the external resources that will support the community? How will members collaborate with each other? You may also derive useful information from the Institute of Osteopathy's [Census](#), as it asked osteopaths what they want from a local professional group.
- Consider the frequency and location of meetings, both remotely and face to face.

Does size matter? There is no osteopathic group that is too large or too small, if it meets the needs of its local professional community. If geographical distances mean your group meets infrequently, invite your colleagues locally to form a sub-group that makes weekly or monthly meetings a viable option ([see Connect with other groups](#)).

Recruiting members

You've identified the type of community you would like to form and spoken to colleagues to win their support. Now you need to get some members:

- Set up an e-group, providing an email address that colleagues can use to contact you.
- [Contact the GOsC](#) who can help to compile an invitation and will email this on your behalf to local osteopaths. The GOsC can also help established groups boost their membership with an email to all osteopaths in your area.
- Make sure the Institute of Osteopathy and the GOsC know of your existence. They will add the contact details of your group to the Osteopathic Network Directory, which is available on both the [GOsC \(o zone\)](#) and [Institute of Osteopathy](#) websites, and provided to new osteopaths.

- Consider developing a simple website for your community. It can provide information about the group, the services this offers, and forthcoming social and CPD events. There are now an abundant number of website providers that offer simple, affordable websites which you can create to meet the needs of your particular group.
- Alternatively, many osteopaths are now active on social media such as Facebook or LinkedIn, and there are numerous osteopathic groups engaging online. This is a great way to gauge interest and recruit members.
- If your group is linked through a common interest you may also find creating your own 'closed' Facebook or LinkedIn group which is a safe and easy way to keep connected and share information and seek advice from peers.
- Develop links with other osteopathic communities and organisations with a view to planning joint events, sharing ideas, resources and costs. For more information, [see Connect with other groups](#).

Osteopathic network

Through what is currently referred to as the Regional Communications Network, osteopathic groups across the UK can interact with each other, and with the GOsC and the iO, and with other osteopathic organisations, such as the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR), Osteopathic Alliance (OA), and Council for Osteopathic Educational Institutions (COEI).

- **Contact Directory** – The iO and GOsC together maintain a central directory of osteopathic groups as a reference for osteopaths, students, and osteopathic organisations. This is available online on the [GOsC o zone](#) and [Institute of Osteopathy](#) websites. Be sure to keep your directory contact details current and accurate, by [emailing changes to the GOsC](#) or [iO](#).
- **Meetings** – The Institute of Osteopathy and GOsC together host meetings up to twice a year of representatives of osteopathic communities. Meetings generally take place at Osteopathy House, London, or in conjunction with the annual iO Convention.

Ensuring a thriving community

Whether setting up a new community or working with an existing group, it is important to keep your network alive and vibrant – this will encourage participation and establish it as an osteopathic hub for your area.

Get others involved

A really successful community relies on more than one person to run it. Encourage colleagues to identify roles or form a 'committee' to help run the group.

Depending on the nature of the group as it develops, it may be helpful to appoint or elect a Chair, and possibly even a Treasurer and a Secretary, if you want/need a more formal structure. You may also want a succession plan to ensure continuity of officers in the management of the community's affairs. This also allows members to gain relevant experience and plan for additional responsibilities. You can find more information here about [the roles of officers](#) you may wish to develop in your group. Fulfilling any of these offices can offer osteopaths an additional source of skills development.

Your membership

Professional communities thrive when they extend a warm welcome to newcomers while continuing to keep existing members engaged and interested. Your members need to feel that belonging to the group adds value to their practice and professional life.

- Invite feedback from members to generate energy and engagement; engage members in collaborative learning and knowledge sharing activities, group activities and networking events that meet individual, group and community goals.
- Provide opportunities for members to play new roles, experiment with new activities.
- Keep accurate records of your membership. In order to comply with data protection legislation, be mindful of how you handle your membership data and destroy this appropriately when necessary. You can get more advice from the gov.uk website [here](#).
- Contact members who are not regularly attending meetings or events to encourage their participation, input and ideas – what can be done to make the group more valued?
- Contact past members to find out why they've not renewed their membership.
- Invite students to meetings. Why not offer student membership?
- Consider discounting membership fees for recent graduates. Recently-trained osteopaths may bring new skills and thinking into the group. Mentoring may offer more senior members the opportunity for skills development.
- Actively encourage osteopaths new to your area to join. This could provide an opportunity for developing new, mutually beneficial business links.

- Encourage the membership to set up a directory of members' business skills (many osteopaths have valuable previous experience in other occupations), e.g. IT, marketing, the law, bookkeeping, human resources, business management.
- Consider circulating an announcement at the beginning of the year that describes the achievements of the group over the last year and outlines a calendar of events and plans for the year ahead.
- Consider extending invitations of membership to other healthcare professionals or relevant individuals who have expressed an interest in getting involved and who could bring knowledge and fresh perspective to the group.

Communicating with the membership

Good communication is at the heart of any successful community – regular member communications will help members feel they 'belong' and keep your membership engaged.

- Provide a dedicated email address for your group, so members can easily make contact.
- Take time to keep your membership contact list up to date.
- Encourage members to advise the 'Secretary' when their contact details change.
- Ask your members if they would like to have a shared directory of members. You might make this available on a dedicated website, but you may want to limit access to members only.
- Create an e-bulletin or email update.
- Make use of social media, for example, a Facebook or LinkedIn group as a platform for member discussions and engagement.
- Develop a group website that includes a calendar of forthcoming events. This can be a means of attracting new members.
- Both the Institute of Osteopathy and GOsC can help promote your community and your events. [Contact the GOsC and iO](#) with information that you would like to publicise.
- Your event or meeting can be advertised for free on the Institute of Osteopathy's website ([What's on for osteopaths](#)) and they will also promote your event through their e-bulletin and magazine.

You should aim to meet regularly – monthly, quarterly, or whatever works best for the membership – either face to face or remotely. Also see 'Supporting your community' on page 16.

It is always easier to get good attendance when meetings are scheduled well ahead, at regular intervals, rather than on an ad-hoc basis that can't be easily planned for. One approach is to set the date of the next meeting at the conclusion of each meeting, and to use email to keep in touch in between. Alternatively, you can develop a calendar of events. Be sure to identify any potential conflicts well in advance – e.g. school holidays, religious/public holidays.

Virtual communities of practice

Communities of practice no longer need to be bound to a location – the widening opportunities offered by the internet and e-communications mean shared-interest groups can flourish, regardless of where their members live and practice.

Social media platforms, like Facebook and Linked-in, offer means of promoting awareness and membership of a new group, and can be inexpensive to run. Be aware, though, that nothing on the internet is truly private and inaccessible to the wider public. Ensure you conduct yourself online in the same professional way you would in public.

Discussions and meetings of your online community is also well-supported by the ever-widening range of software that supports this way of working and communicating. Experiment with Skype and programmes like Citrix's GoToMeeting and GoToWebinar (<http://www.gotomeeting.co.uk/>) to source services that support the way you and your members want to operate.

What about finance?

Consider how you are going to fund the group's activities. An annual membership fee will help cover administrative overheads and could fund some events. Alternately, for each event you will need to charge an admission fee to cover costs. It is not unreasonable to consider paying the group's administrators a small sum to compensate them for their time and expenses.

- It is helpful to set up a bank account. High street banks offer a 'Treasurer's account' for small, not-for-profit organisations which carries no bank charges. It is advisable to have at least two officers who are cheque signatories for the group, to protect against any potential concerns over handling of funds.
- You should keep an account book that is available to any member if they wish to view the accounts and the group's financial transactions.
- Appoint a Treasurer to take charge of funds, the bank account, simple bookkeeping and to produce an annual statement of accounts.
- Over time, the community may even begin to develop a small surplus of funds. Have mechanisms for enabling the membership to together decide how this should be used.

Events

Osteopathic communities should aim to offer a range of events and activities. Most often these will be CPD and/or inter-professional learning. Your members may also welcome the opportunity for social get-togethers, business networking, professional/peer support, and discussion of wider issues affecting osteopathic practice.

Types of events

Consider offering a wide range of learning options and formats:

- Guest speakers on clinical topics and specialists who can talk on other important issues, including consent, equality and diversity or data protection, for example
- Osteopath-led technique sessions
- Small group case-based discussions
- Workshops to explore ethical/clinical dilemmas, possibly involving role play
- Representatives of osteopathic organisations to update members on aspects of current professional development, e.g. Institute of Osteopathy, General Osteopathic Council, National Council for Osteopathic Research, Osteopathic Sports Care Association, Osteopathic Alliance, etc.
- Representatives of key organisations in the wider healthcare sector to provide insight into developments, priorities and opportunities of interest to osteopaths
- Speakers who will challenge current thinking and introduce new perspectives and knowledge into the group.

The [Institute of Osteopathy's Speakers' Corner](#) facility provides an online register of quality speakers who are willing to present to osteopathic groups.

Attendees will expect to receive a CPD certificate verifying their attendance and a receipt for any payment.

Getting to know colleagues socially can benefit you professionally in many ways. Your group might consider:

- Monthly social get-togethers at a regular location
- Annual BBQ or dinner, including family and friends
- Annual sporting competitions.

Event organisation

Location

- Venue considerations: is the venue easy to find? Is there public transport? Parking? Refreshments?
- Ask your members if they have access to any suitable facilities
- Use your status as a non-profit educational service group to open doors
- Room facilities: AV? Layout? Tables? Plinths for practical work? Capacity?
- Accessibility: is the venue suitable for attendees that have special needs, e.g. hearing loop, wheelchair access. Remember to also check members' dietary requirements.

Boosting attendance

- You may wish to open some or all of your CPD events to non-members, as an additional means of generating revenue, attracting new members, and networking more widely. Your events can be advertised via both the iO's event calendars and GOsC o-zone.
- You can also freely advertise CPD events in *the osteopath* (GOsC) and *Osteopathy Today* (Institute for Osteopathy). [Contact the editors](#) of each magazine to arrange.
- Social networking, e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.
- Provide the personal touch. A concern for new members or guests is whether they will be made to feel welcome – make an effort to introduce new faces and encourage your members to engage.

Evaluating the event

Invite feedback from your members/attendees. Take time to discuss with your committee/co-organisers what worked, what did not and what you might do differently the next time. Ways of seeking feedback include:

- Online survey, e.g. <http://www.surveymonkey.com>
- Short email poll
- Feedback forms provided at the event.

Connect with other communities

Think big – co-operating with others

Look out for opportunities to link up with other groups for joint initiatives and special events, sharing the costs of key speakers and venues. Check the Osteopathic Communications Network Directory, available on the [GOsC o zone](#), for details of other groups in your area.

Think small – subs and hubs

Communities that serve large geographical areas may benefit from encouraging members to form smaller, local sub-groups or cells. This may allow for more regular contact between colleagues, such as evening CPD or social events.

Or your group may wish to explore opportunities for setting up shared interest sub-groups.

NCOR operates a small network of osteopathic Research Hubs across the UK. Does your group wish to establish a research hub to serve osteopaths in your area, or forge links with the NCOR hubs? [Contact NCOR](#) for more information.

Think and act together

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with their devolved political and healthcare administrations, regionally-based osteopathic groups may serve an additional important function: providing a forum for osteopaths to come together to agree a common position on a national health policy development, and to function as a lobbying group. This would also afford the Welsh/NI/Scottish Governments, and/or the GOsC/Institute of Osteopathy, with a single point of contact with the osteopathic profession in that country.

Clustering

Increasingly, osteopaths are looking to work together in small communities because there is an issue or a service on which they want to collaborate. Examples include joint marketing initiatives and promotion, clinical support (e.g. sharing booking and secretarial resources), or as potential peer review groups proposed in the [new GOsC CPD scheme](#).

The Institute of Osteopathy (iO) is actively encouraging and working with a number of such 'clusters', to help the osteopaths understand what their aims are in clustering, and opportunities for development. For further information on 'clustering', [contact the iO](#).

Smart linking - Remember linking up does not have to be face to face: technology has made virtual meetings relatively easy to arrange. Try, for example, Skype and GoToMeeting.

Why not set up an online group, using LinkedIn or Facebook?

Developing osteopathic practice

Osteopathic networks can play a vital role in promoting the development of the profession and osteopathic practice. Make sure your community has a voice and has influence. Here's how:

- Many organisations, including the GOsC and the Institute of Osteopathy frequently use osteopathic communities as focus groups for taking early soundings of practitioners' views on new developments. Their interaction with your community also gives them a better understanding of the challenges you face in practice. Be sure you take every opportunity to join in the debate and provide feedback.
- Help your members to be aware of and proactively engaged in the projects of the Osteopathic Development Group (see page 17). Use meetings to discuss and understand the Osteopathic Development Group's project aims, collate and feedback members' views, and encourage your members to be involved in piloting new schemes. Your group can help shape the osteopathic future.
- Actively exchange information with other communities through the [Osteopathic Development Group](#).
- Think of innovative ways of functioning and share successes with other osteopathic communities.
- Use your meetings not just for CPD, but as an opportunity also to discuss and debate ethical dilemmas, osteopathic practice standards, business development and raising the profile of osteopathy locally.
- Discuss as a group how you can best support new practitioners. Welcome newly qualified osteopaths into your community: they may have new skills you can learn; they could gladly benefit from your experience – and any excess patients you are willing to share.
- In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland your community may have an important role to play as the voice of osteopathy, influencing national policy development. The GOsC and Institute of Osteopathy can liaise with you on this. In England too, an osteopathic group can be a point of contact for local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).
- Your group can represent a contact point for local media or business development links. Talk to the Institute of Osteopathy about how you can promote osteopathy locally.

Supporting your community

Many osteopathic organisations are keen to offer your community support and assistance and would welcome your active involvement in their work. Be sure your group is 'plugged into' this important professional network.

Here's how they can help:

Institute of Osteopathy (iO)

The Institute of Osteopathy is the professional body for osteopaths in the UK and exists to support, unite, promote and develop the osteopathic profession. The Institute represents two thirds of UK osteopaths, and welcomes all to the membership.



At the same time, the iO offers all established and evolving osteopathic communities a range of support tailored to your needs, and this support does not require membership of the Institute of Osteopathy.

- [What's on for Osteopaths](#) – Get your event publicised for free on the iO website. Tell us about your event and we will publish it online and promote in our fortnightly e-bulletin *ConnectiOns* and in our bi-monthly magazine *Osteopathy Today*.
- [Speakers' Corner](#) – An online register of quality and affordable speakers who have expressed an interest to provide CPD/ talks to osteopathic groups. Many of these speakers have previously presented at an iO annual convention and have been personally invited by the iO to join this register of speakers.
- **iO Speakers** – The iO representatives from Council and the senior management team, are available to visit your group to discuss the work of the iO and how we can best support your activities. We welcome the opportunity to discuss and garner views on topics of importance to the profession and provide information to your group on a range of subjects.
- **Business 'Clustering'** – where members of a local osteopathic community work together to agree a promotional budget and promote themselves as a team, the iO can provide advice and guidance. Pooling resources in this way can, for example, allow for a larger media advert that lists all participating practices, or enables colleagues to develop a strategy to offer an expanded range of services in your area.

The iO's professional development team is happy to consider other projects that support groups as a whole, or your individual group. Contact the Institute of Osteopathy on: tel 01582 488455 or email enquiries@osteopathy.org.uk more information on these services. Website: www.osteopathy.org

General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)

Some of the ways in which the GOsC can help your community flourish:



- **Osteopathic Group Contact Directory** – advise the GOsC if you have formed a new group and we will add your contact details to the contact directory that is available online and provided to students and all new osteopaths joining the Register.
- **Promoting events** – let the GOsC know about your local events and we will post these on the events calendar on the **o zone** or in *the osteopath* magazine.
- **Osteopathic Communications Network** – the GOsC, in conjunction with other organisations, hosts periodic meetings of the leaders of osteopathic communities across the UK, to seek early views on new projects and regulatory and other developments. This is an opportunity to influence the development of the profession and osteopathic practice, so ensure your group is well-informed and your views are heard.
- **New CPD requirements, peer support and mentoring** – the GOsC will support communities to develop peer review services that meet the requirements of the [new CPD scheme](#). There will be help too with the development of mentoring and peer support services that will make your group an important osteopathic hub in the region.
- **GOsC presenters** – GOsC representatives, including the Chief Executive, welcome invitations to attend your meetings and talk to your members about regulatory and health policy developments.

Contact the Communications Department of the General Osteopathic Council on: tel 020 7357 6655 x242 or email info@osteopathy.org.uk Website: www.osteopathy.org.uk



National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR)

The NCOR team can offer talks and workshops relating to the osteopathic evidence base and on evidence gathering activities, including clinical audit, using PROMs (patient reported outcome measures), understanding and using the PILARS (incident reporting) platform, and basic data collection initiatives that could boost your own practice and osteopathic practice in your area.

The NCOR team is small, so serving larger meetings is more practicable – try to arrange a joint meeting that includes other communities in your region. A fee to cover travel costs may apply. Smaller CPD groups can invite NCOR to lead a meeting using Skype or similar platforms.

Consider also how your community can actively support and be involved in the work of NCOR and the Osteopathic Development Group. Talk to NCOR about how your members can join in evidence-gathering projects, and how you can encourage patients to be involved, through the osteopathic PROMs and PREOS (patient reported experiences of osteopathic services) projects.

For more information, see www.ncor.org.uk, or email NCOR Senior Research Officer, Carol Fawkes, on c.fawkes@qmul.ac.uk

Osteopathic Alliance

The Osteopathic Alliance (OA) is a coalition of post-graduate education providers. Osteopathic Alliance member organisations can provide speakers and practical workshops on a wide range of osteopathic topics. Their faculties are leading the development of many areas of osteopathic practice and are always enthusiastic to share their ideas and approaches.



The members of the OA are:

- Foundation for Paediatric Osteopathy
- Institute of Classical Osteopathy
- Molinari Institute of Health
- Rollin E Becker Institute
- Association of Animal Osteopaths
- Sutherland Cranial College
- Sutherland Society

Details of services offered by some Osteopathic Alliance member organisations are as follows:

Sutherland Cranial College (SCC)

The SCC offers a wealth of experience in lecturing and teaching on osteopathic matters, particularly relating to osteopathy in the cranial field. Our Pathway and other courses, conferences and events, open to members and non-members, offer a range of subject areas of interest to osteopaths of all types.

We can provide lectures and workshops on: working with babies and children; research; anatomy and physiology, aspects of Internal Medicine; and clinical matters. For enquiries and further information, contact the SCC office on admin@sutherlandcranialcollege.co.uk; telephone: 01453 767 607 / 01453 767 979.

Association of Animal Osteopaths

The Association of Animal Osteopaths can supply speakers on a variety of topics, including: what osteopathy for animals involves; how osteopaths can obtain further training up to Masters level; regulation relating to animal therapists, including osteopaths; recent research. By arrangement, the Association can also provide demonstrations and workshops (fees may apply). For further information, email: animalosteopaths@gmail.com

Rollin E Becker Institute (REBI)

REBI is fairly small and (human) resources are limited, but we can offer what we call a 'Tutorial in a Box'. This is a semi-structured 4-hour tutorial that we can take into practices to support osteopaths who have some previous cranial training in enhancing/revising their knowledge and skills base. This is preceded by a SWOT (mainly SW) self-assessment to inform the tutorial, which is a combination of theory and supervised and guided practical sessions.

More detail is available on the REBI website at: <http://www.rollinbeckerinstitute.co.uk>

Osteopathic Development Group



The Osteopathic Development Group (ODG) comprises organisations representing all sectors of the profession: education and training, practice, research, and regulation. The organisations that comprise the Osteopathic Development Group include:

- College of Osteopathic Educational Institutions
- National Council of Osteopathic Research
- Osteopathic Alliance
- Institute of Osteopathy
- General Osteopathic Council.

Information about the ODG development work can be found on the [ODG website](#).

The growing network of osteopathic communities across the UK has an important role to play in promoting osteopathic development in all these arenas – and, in turn, osteopathic organisations are keen to foster links with groups to offer mutual support.

Strengthen your group's links with the Osteopathic Development Group by contacting the ODG Secretariat (Matthew Rogers) on Matthew@osteopathy.org

Useful contacts

Osteopathic Development Group

Secretariat:

Email: Matthew@osteopathy.org

Website: www.osteodevelopment.org.uk

Institute of Osteopathy

General enquiries:

Tel: 01582 488 455

Email: enquiries@osteopathy.org

Website: www.osteopathy.org

To publicise your event or request a speaker:

Email: comms@osteopathy.org

General Osteopathic Council

Communications Department:

Tel: 020 7357 6655 x 242

Email: info@osteopathy.org.uk

Website: www.osteopathy.org.uk

***the osteopath* Editor:**

Email: editor@osteopathy.org.uk

National Council of Osteopathic Research

Senior Research Officer:

Email: c.fawkes@qmul.ac.uk

Tel: 020 7882 6131

Website: www.ncor.org.uk

Osteopathic Alliance

Foundation for Paediatric Osteopathy

Website: www.fpo.org.uk

Email CPD: contact@fpo.org

Molinari Institute of Health

Website: www.molinari-institute-of-health.org

Rollin E Becker Institute

Website: www.rollinbeckerinstitute.co.uk

Association of Animal Osteopaths

Email: animalosteopaths@gmail.com

Website: <https://associationofanimalosteopaths.com/>

Sutherland Cranial College

Tel: 01453 767 607 / 01453 767 979.

Email: admin@sutherlandcranialcollege.co.uk

Sutherland Society

Website: www.cranial.co.uk

Institute of Classical Osteopathy

Website: www.classical-osteopathy.org

Osteopathic Sports Care Association

Email: admin.officer@osca.org.uk

Website: www.osca.org.uk

Headache Management Group

Email: cliffordlomas@hotmail.co.uk

Website: <http://www.ophm.org>

Osteopathic Performing Arts Care Association

Email: hermeshealthosteopathy@gmail.com

Twitter: https://twitter.com/osteo_arts

Acupuncture in Osteopathic Practice

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1188948934496435/>

Annex A: Job roles - who does what in a group?

When setting up a professional network it is worth considering the type of management and administrative activities that may be required, e.g. work between meetings, either on one's own or with others.

Some communities will be small and will not have the number of members required to undertake specific roles and will be the responsibility of one person. However if you are a larger group, encourage others to undertake different roles and spread the responsibilities amongst a number of members.

Here are suggestions of the main roles required to effectively run a more formally structured group:

1. **Chairperson** – the role of the chair is to direct the overall management of the group. The Chair is responsible for ensuring orderly meetings and seeing that all relevant matters are discussed. The Chair:
 - Ensures the group functions properly
 - Ensures the group is managed effectively
 - Provides support and supervision to other members of the committee
 - Represents the group at external meetings and acts on behalf of the membership.
2. **Secretary** – if you are running a large community, you may require a Secretary to support the Chair in ensuring the smooth functioning of the group. The Secretary will act as an information and reference point for the Chair and for members, and will be responsible for some day-to-day administration. The Secretary:
 - Ensures that meetings are effectively organised and minutes taken
 - Maintains effective records and administration
 - Upholds legal requirements
 - Deals with communication and correspondence.
3. **Treasurer** – the Treasurer oversees the financial management, working closely with other members to safeguard funds. The Treasurer acts as an information and reference point for the Chair and other members, outlining the current financial status, and presenting relevant documentation. The Treasurer provides:
 - General financial oversight
 - Financial planning and budgeting
 - Financial reporting
 - Banking, bookkeeping and financial record keeping.

It is good practice to alternate responsibility for these activities amongst individual members, possibly on an annual basis. You may wish to ask your members for nominations and arrange a member vote.

As your community develops, you may identify different roles and responsibilities for members to support the activities of your group. Ensure that there is a clear understanding of the responsibility and time commitment required for these roles.

Annex B: iO census - headline findings

In 2014, the Institute of Osteopathy undertook a survey of its membership to gain a better understanding of the views of osteopaths and the nature of osteopathic practice. This census will be repeated in 2017

You may find the information and results of interest when considering the activities of your community and the nature of your membership.

Patients and treatments

- Adults of working age are most common patients (90%+), followed by people of retirement age (84%), and sportspeople (45%)
- Least confidence is shown in treating infants/young children, palliative care and animals
- Virtually everyone (98%) relies on word of mouth to attract new patients, followed by websites (70%) and referrals from other therapists (46%)
- 92% don't currently treat NHS-funded patients; of those, half would be interested in doing so

Support

- 50% belong to a regional society – most commonly first heard about it through verbal referral (44%), followed by email/bulletin (14%)
- Meetings most typically attended quarterly (29%) or every six months (26%). Only 6% never attend
- Most common reasons to attend are inexpensive CPD, quality of CPD, and presentation content
- Most useful meeting content is clinical skills that could be applied in practice, osteopathy specific content, and other healthcare disciplines
- Non-attending members would be most encouraged to attend if looking for clinical support/networking, for compliance with Continuing Fitness to Practise, or if looking for business support/networking
- Only 13% currently receive mentoring; a further 44% would be interested in receiving this
- Mentoring would be most valued in clinical, professional development, business support & development, patient care, and marketing
- 1 in 5 have received mentoring training - Similarly, 1 in 5 currently provide mentoring
- Only 40% felt well supported in their first 3 years – 50% didn't
- Support would have been most welcome in terms of clinical, peer group support, access to a mentoring scheme, marketing, and business support & development

- Undergraduate training could have better prepared them in terms of business development & support, marketing, financial matters, communicating with other professionals, and setting realistic expectations on timelines
- 71% of associates think they are well supported by their principals; whilst 92% of principals think they support their associates well.

Opinions

- 74% feel graduating as an osteopath was only the beginning, rather than feeling their undergraduate degree equipped them with all that they needed to practice as an osteopath (9%)
- People are much more inclined to support mentoring and working and sharing knowledge with the next generation (71%), than to feel mentoring undermines their practice (8%)
- There is strong belief in working with other healthcare professionals to promote osteopathy (62%), rather than feeling this would dilute the profession (15%).