

National Council for



Osteopathic Research

Annual Report

2003 ~ 2004

July 2004

Contents

The Role of the National Council for Osteopathic Research	3
Report from the Chair of NCOR	4
Research Officer's Report	7
Vision and Mission Statements	10
Constitution of NCOR	11
NCOR Achievements in relation to Draft Strategic Plan.	12
NCOR Financial Statement	15
Appendix	16

The Role of the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR).

This is the first Annual Report from the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR) since its foundation in March, 2003. NCOR is an independent body that is supported by funding from the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC), the British Osteopathic Association (BOA) and each of the accredited colleges of osteopathy in the United Kingdom. Each of the stakeholders who contribute financially have representatives at NCOR. There are two additional representatives who represent private practitioners and NHS practitioners. The full constitution of NCOR is listed on page 11. All of the college representatives have experience within the field of osteopathic research and are currently involved in the academic institution they represent.

Since its foundation, NCOR has appointed a Chairperson, Professor Ann Moore. In October, 2003, NCOR held a strategic planning event to formalise its Vision and Mission statements and its research strategy for the next five years. A Draft Strategic Plan has been formally produced and can be found in the Appendix.

NCOR is based at the Clinical Research Centre in the School of Health Professions at the University of Brighton. The Chair is head of the Clinical Research Centre (CRC). A Research Officer, Carol Fawkes, was appointed in February, 2004 and is present at the CRC for four days per week. The CRC has also funded a new post of part time Senior Research Fellow in Osteopathy, which Dr Janine Leach took up in May, 2004.

The lifeblood of any therapeutic discipline lies in its ability to generate, refine and continuously test out new knowledge. Such a commitment is a hallmark of a forward thinking and serious profession and ensures the protection of both patients and professionals. Researching osteopathic practice and learning from that research should be right at the heart of the way the profession thinks; it is from this stance that NCOR has been created. However, the NCOR approach is not prescriptive. NCOR aims to work with the profession to foster and encourage, but not enforce research and to meet the needs identified by the profession as a whole.

Report from the Chairman of the National Council of Osteopathic Research

Welcome to this first report of the National Council of Osteopathic Research. I was delighted and honoured to have been given the opportunity to work with the osteopathic profession in developing research capacity and the osteopathic evidence base. My appointment commenced on March 1st 2003 and it has been a busy eighteen months.

The role of the Chair of NCOR officially is:

- To chair and lead meetings of NCOR
- Work with stakeholders to establish the research mission and objectives of NCOR
- Lead NCOR towards achieving its mission and facilitate contact with funding bodies and other organisations of relevance to osteopathy

Unofficially the role is developing fast into additionally a facilitator's role at grass roots level, with enquiries from osteopaths about their research ideas, their research aspirations and frustrations, becoming a routine part of day to day activity. The challenges are great but the rewards are highly tangible in terms of the quality interactions that have been experienced over the last eighteen months with osteopaths from all areas of osteopathic practice.

There have been meetings of NCOR approximately every two months since March 2003. The dynamics of the NCOR meetings have changed over this period from a situation where a number of individual organisations were represented around a table, to one where those individual representatives are now working as a committed group of people to make the NCOR initiatives work.

I am very grateful to my colleagues on NCOR for their patience with me as a novice in osteopathic terms, their openness to the developments that have taken place and their commitment to the work of NCOR. A full list of NCOR members is to be found in this document.

The first major activity for NCOR in 2003 was to engage in a two day Strategic Planning event held at the University of Brighton in Eastbourne. A full record of that event is available on request. The event culminated in the draft Strategic Plan, this draft was then circulated to all stakeholder organisations for approval after the event and once approved, was then incorporated into presentations during the NCOR component of the seven General Osteopathic Council regional conferences. Members of NCOR were delighted that the General Osteopathic Council felt able to give NCOR air time during these regional conferences.

At the regional conferences it was important to have the opportunity to gain comments from individual osteopaths about the draft Strategic Plan in order for the profession to feel ownership of it. With the regional conferences almost completed. (The Dublin conference to occur in October) the Strategic Plan will be modified in relation to comments received and then published fully in *The Osteopath* for the whole profession to see.

The regional conferences have also been an opportunity during workshop activities to identify research topics which are of relevance to individual practitioners and we

will be considering these ideas at subsequent NCOR meetings. It was interesting to have heard from practicing osteopaths about what their learning needs are in relation to research, audit and evidence based practice. In addition following each conference, a number of osteopaths from each region have expressed their interest in becoming more involved in research activities. We hope to engage them this autumn in the development of regional research hubs.

Carol Fawkes, the Research Officer for NCOR was appointed in February 2004. Carol's first priority was preparing for the regional conferences. A Research Administrator employed for half a day a week on NCOR business was appointed in March 2004 and joined the NCOR team based at the University of Brighton. Together Carol Fawkes and the administrator have set about identifying materials and information which are relevant to incorporation into the planned NCOR website. Carol Fawkes gives a more detailed breakdown of plans for the website in her report.

Members of NCOR have begun to develop a Research Governance Framework and Code of Good Practice for Osteopathic Research. This is a timely activity as many universities and other organisations are engaged in the same task.

Carol Fawkes, as Research Officer is now regularly fielding enquiries from osteopaths about all aspects of research and evidence based practice.

I have this year been invited to attend and speak at a number of osteopathic related conferences. I have through time constraints been unable to attend all of these conferences, but the NCOR team at Brighton, which now includes Dr Janine Leach, who has recently been appointed as a Senior Research Fellow in the Clinical Research Centre, at the University of Brighton, and is a member of the NCOR committee, is attempting to have a presence at as many of these conferences as possible.

As Chair of NCOR, I have attended all but one of the regional conferences this year and have begun to visit stakeholder organisations in order to develop first hand insight into the workings of these organisations; subsequently I have had the opportunity to meet as many individuals as possible who are engaged in the work of these organisations. These visits will continue into the autumn and winter period. The visits give individuals based in these organisations the opportunity to raise any issues that they may have in respect of research development within the osteopathic profession, and it is also the opportunity to explore possible collaborative links between groups.

I have also been engaged in a small number of meetings with registered charities, for example BackCare and the Hospital Savings Association. We have done this in the first instance to raise the profile of the National Council for Osteopathic Research in respect of these organisations and also in order to try to develop strategic links with them. We have set up a meeting with the HSA for the autumn, which will hopefully lead to some positive developments in the funding of research degrees for osteopaths.

Through negotiation between a number of stakeholders, the development of a new peer reviewed high quality international journal of osteopathy looks likely. This initiative will undoubtedly raise the profile of osteopathic research and we hope that the negotiations between the potential publisher, Elsevier, and interested parties will reach a fruitful conclusion.

A regular presence for NCOR is planned for the coming year within “The Osteopath”. A list of articles has been produced and individual authors are in the process of producing these papers so that there will be a steady supply of research related papers going into “The Osteopath” each time it is published. These papers will be focused towards osteopaths who are novice researchers and those who wish to know more about evidence based practice.

Having reflected on the last year’s activities and discussions that have been had at conferences, and also with individual osteopaths by email and telephone, a number of recommendations can be made, which I hope can be addressed over the next year.

1. The formation of regional research hubs should start to occur within the next six months
2. Consideration needs to be given to a series of workshops/lectures/seminars to fulfil some of the learning needs expressed by osteopaths in practice in relation to research and evidence based practice
3. Consideration should be given to the possibility of the General Osteopathic Council creating a modest research fund from which grants can be awarded each year on a competitive peer review basis to novice osteopathic researchers. This move would be common with other professional organisations, for example, The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
4. Information made available to members of the public and other Health Professionals via stakeholder websites, leaflets, journals and other media should now be considered in relation to the evidence available to underpin statements made
5. NCOR continues in the pursuit of fulfilling its mission statements for the next four years.

Professor Ann Moore
Chair of NCOR

Research Officer's Report.

I took up my appointment on 2nd February, 2004 and now work at Eastbourne for four days per week. I continue to work in my own practice for one and a half days per week. My first NCOR meeting took place on 10th February and it was a pleasant opportunity to meet all of the stakeholder representatives for the first time. I now take responsibility for the taking of minutes at these meetings and the distribution of agendas and other communications to NCOR members. My work so far has covered five main areas.

Regional Conferences: An immediate priority was to organise, prepare and attend the seven NCOR Regional Conferences between April and July, 2004. The conferences took place at Bristol, Harrogate, Heathrow, Gatwick, Cambridge, Scotland and Warwick. (An eighth conference will take place in Dublin in October). They have given NCOR the chance to introduce itself and its representatives to the profession, to obtain feedback from osteopaths about the Draft Strategic Plan and identify osteopaths who wish to join research hubs, take part in standardised data collection or be part of a larger research study. The needs of osteopaths for research have also been identified; this has tended to focus on basic training in research methodology, statistics, critical appraisal, research ethics, clinical audit, locating funding and completing grant applications. The conferences also elicited a very diverse selection of research questions reflecting the special interests of osteopaths as well as questions that would benefit the whole profession in building the evidence base that it will increasingly need.

Osteopathic Research Evidence: A great deal of time has been spent trying to locate published and unpublished osteopathic research to populate the database of completed osteopathic research, and in response to enquiries from osteopaths looking for information for PCT proposals etc. This task has certainly underlined the paucity of published material; it would be nice to see publication of many more MSc dissertations and some undergraduate research. At present the profession is relying on a large quantity of American research which can be very different in its approach to osteopathy to that in Europe. A large number of osteopathic colleges in Europe and North America have been contacted to try to locate as much research as possible. Since the Regional Conferences many more enquiries have arrived from osteopaths trying to locate research now that they know NCOR exists. Most of the profession do not have access to Athens passwords to locate research; the establishment of such a facility has been requested many times at the conferences. In an attempt to facilitate research support for osteopaths, letters have been prepared for a number of Higher Education Institutions to attempt to arrange for access for the use of research equipment and support at centres around the country.

Communication: A draft template for the website has been prepared and initial meetings have been held with the website designer. A longer pre-construction meeting is due to be held on 30th September. The plan is for the website to contain information about NCOR, its vision, mission statements, a copy of the Draft Strategic Plan and a copy of the Annual Report. Most importantly the website will be updated regularly to give current information about conferences, calls for papers for conferences and conference reports. There will also be information about research courses, funding opportunities, research currently being conducted and results of research that has been completed. The aim is for the website to be an easily accessible resource for osteopaths to use to keep themselves aware of current research and how it may influence practice. The database of completed osteopathic research will also be accessible via the website. A great deal of care has gone into

planning the website as it will be a significant marketing tool not just for osteopathic research but for the profession as a whole.

The Osteopath will remain a source of communication for those osteopaths who do not have internet access. Previous articles have been prepared to give details about the stakeholders' representatives, the vision statement, mission statements and how the draft strategic plan has been translated into a series of aims to be achieved. A plenary of the conferences has been prepared to be published in the August edition; this has included feedback about research needs and the research topics members of the profession feel we should be addressing. In response to some of the research needs identified at the conferences, a series of articles have been planned for the next 12 months. These will include contributions from many of the NCOR stakeholder representatives. The British Osteopathic Association also supports NCOR by allowing us to communicate with the profession via the pages of Osteopathy Today.

In addition to answering enquiries about completed research from members of the profession and other agencies and researchers, enquiries are also received about available research courses at all levels from certificate to PhD. Funding remains a continually difficult area and a considerable amount of time has been spent trying to locate funding bodies and charities suitable for applications from osteopaths.

Communication with members of the profession on a one to one and small group basis has, without doubt, been the most rewarding aspect of the role of Research Officer so far.

A **Research Governance and Ethics Framework** (RGF) is being prepared. It is important to have clearly defined guidelines and procedures to be followed when undertaking good quality research. Respect for the wellbeing, rights and dignity of the patient should be at the heart of such guidelines. A research governance framework gives advice on all the steps to be followed during the research process including consideration as to the worthiness of an idea for investigation, the ethical procedure and the manner in which the research process is implemented.

The initial part of the framework has been sent out to stakeholder representatives for their comments. The remaining parts of the framework are still being prepared. The need for a Research Governance Framework (RGF) that is user friendly has been highlighted by osteopaths attending the conferences. It has been valuable to hear about and learn from the difficulties encountered by other professions who have prepared a similar document. At times other professions have found their RGFs have discouraged research by being too cumbersome and failing to offer practical advice concerning the difficulties encountered by researchers.

Further Training: The opportunity has also arisen to attend two research conferences. The first was on Research Ethics for the Allied Health Professions on 29th April 2004 at the College of Occupational Therapists in London. The second was "Developing Research Strategies in Complementary Medicine" on 14th May organised by the University of Southampton Complementary Medicine Research Unit. One meeting for the Prince of Wales Foundation for Integrated Health has also been attended. The conferences covered issues on ethics, safety in research and involved presentations from every complementary and allied health profession except osteopathy. It would be very productive to see some research presentations being made at similar conferences to counter the erroneous criticism that we as a profession are conducting absolutely no research. In September, the ICAOR 2004 (5th International Conference on Advances in Osteopathic Research) was attended in Lake Erie, USA. A diverse range of very interesting osteopathic research

presentations were made by delegates attending from England, Australia and the USA. Next year the conference will return to London. Details of conferences and calls for papers will be posted on the NCOR website.

Future Work: In many ways, the most exciting times for NCOR are yet to come. A good deal of the groundwork in terms of strategic planning has been completed; the opportunity now comes to complete work on the database of completed osteopathic research and to see the website make its appearance. A journal scan section will be included in *The Osteopath* to keep members informed about research going on in other disciplines which is relevant to practice. NCOR can look forward to starting to work with the research groups to address research training needs and then get some research projects started so that the profession can take the initial steps on the road to achieving the evidence base that it will increasingly need if it is to remain a credible part of mainstream healthcare.

Carol Fawkes
Research Development Officer
NCOR

Vision Statement for osteopathic research for the next five years

The development of a profession-wide research culture which is inclusive, robust, credible, has national and increasingly international impact and benefits for osteopathic teaching, learning and patient care.

National Council for Osteopathic Research Mission Statements:

1. To establish and develop a comprehensive information resource for osteopathic research in order to promote a mutual research dialogue within the osteopathic profession and with other related professions.
2. To create a forum that will develop and nurture a pan-professional osteopathic research culture, facilitate linkage of research to practice and identify national research priorities.
3. To develop a research governance framework and code of good practice in research for osteopathy which links with frameworks already developed by the National Health Service and the Research Funding Councils.
4. To increase and improve the profile of osteopathic research at national and international levels with policy makers, HEIs, the NHS and fund-holders.
5. To increase collaboration in research amongst osteopathic providers and HEIs nationally and with like minded researchers internationally to improve the teaching, learning and research nexus and the quality of osteopathic research generally.
6. To improve the quality and quantity of research outputs.
7. To develop appropriate channels for research dissemination e.g. websites, journals, etc.
8. To identify and nurture sources of funding for research activities.

National Council for Osteopathic Research Constitution

Chair	Professor Ann Moore
The British College of Osteopathic Medicine (BCOM)	Dr Nick Walters
British Osteopathic Association (BOA)	Mr Michael Watson
The British School of Osteopathy (BSO)	Ms Kate Nash
The College of Osteopaths (COET)	Dr Janine Leach
The European School of Osteopathy	Dr Peter Collins
General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)	Ms Brigid Tucker Mr Vince Cullen
The London College of Osteopathic Medicine	Dr Roderic MacDonald
The London School of Osteopathy	Mr Robin Kirk
NHS Practitioners' Representative	Mr Martin Pendry
Oxford Brookes University	Mr Jorge Esteves
Private Practitioners' Representative	Mr Tim McClune
Surrey Institute of Osteopathic Medicine (SIOM)	Dr Janine Leach
Research Officer	Carol Fawkes

NCOR Achievements In Relation to the Draft Strategic Plan.

Mission Statement 1.

<p>Area for development:</p> <p>Undertake a rolling stock-take of existing UK and internationally based osteopathic research which has taken place since 1990.</p>	<p>NCOR Action:</p> <p>Research has been gathered and is continuing to be gathered from the accredited colleges of osteopathy in the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and Europe.</p>
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Time to full development : 2 years.
Responsibility lies with the Research Officer.

Mission Statement 2.

<p>Area for development:</p> <p>Develop avenues for the exchange of information and ideas in relation to osteopathic research and the use of research evidence in everyday osteopathic practice.</p>	<p>NCOR Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented the Draft Strategic Plan to the profession at 7 Regional Conferences. • Osteopathic researchers speakers identified and invited to present their work to express how their research has benefited their practise. • Workshops to encourage osteopaths to identify “Which research questions should the profession be asking?” have resulted in research priorities emerging. • Osteopaths to express their interest in joining a local research hub and research training needs were identified • Articles have been placed in “The Osteopath” to introduce NCOR to the profession, as part of the new NCOR ‘insert.’
<p>Timescale: June – December, 2004.</p>	<p>Responsibility lies with NCOR Chair and the Research Officer.</p>

Mission Statement 3.

<p>Area for development:</p> <p>Develop a Research Governance and Framework and ethics code of practice to osteopathic research cultures.</p>	<p>NCOR Action:</p> <p>The initial part of the Research Governance and Ethics Framework has been prepared based on existing research governance and ethics codes of practice that have been identified by the</p>
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	accredited colleges. Copies of the Department of Health: Health and Social Care Framework have also been examined. It has been sent out to the stakeholder representatives for their comments. The remaining part of the RGF is being prepared
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**Time to completion: Research Governance Framework in place by Winter, 2004.
Responsibility lies with: Members of NCOR and the Research Officer.**

Mission Statements 4 and 7.

<p>Area for Development:</p> <p>Explore multiple avenues for dissemination of information concerning osteopathic research and the use of evidence based practice. Avenues to include a website and a high quality UK/internationally driven research journal for osteopaths.</p>	<p>NCOR Action:</p> <p>A menu of items to be included on the website has been agreed by the stakeholder representatives. The Chair has obtained the agreement of the University of Brighton to host the website. A final meeting with the website designer will take place on 30th September.</p> <p>Discussions regarding a UK/International research journal are ongoing and the possibility of an osteopathic research association and newsletter has been suggested.</p>
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**Time to completion: website – 6 months to 2 years.
journal - operational within 2 years.
Responsibility lies with: Chair, Research Officer and other NCOR members.**

Mission statement 5.

<p>Area for development:</p> <p>Explore areas of research collaboration in research amongst accredited colleges and HEIs, identify like-minded international researchers.</p>	<p>NCOR Action:</p> <p>Identified current research priorities of large fund holding bodies and charitable organisations e.g. HSA, Department of Health, Cerebra, ARC and MRC.</p>
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**Time to completion: ongoing activity.
Responsibility lies with Chair, Research Officer and all NCOR members.**

Mission Statement 6

<p>Area for development:</p> <p>Increase the understanding of research principles among osteopaths by increasing the provision of high quality CPD courses and increasing the number</p>	<p>NCOR action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference presentations by NCOR and osteopathic researchers have informed the profession that there are a variety
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<p>of research based post graduate programmes. Increase the frequency of publication of undergraduate and MSc dissertations.</p>	<p>of research approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences have also identified the quantity and depth of needs of osteopaths in terms of research training. • Conferences have encouraged more osteopaths to seek assistance in the preparation of their dissertations for publication.
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Mission Statement 8.

<p>Area for development:</p> <p>Explore avenues for funding of osteopathic research at a variety of levels from small projects, MSc/PhD sponsorship and profession-wide large scale projects.</p>	<p>NCOR Action:</p> <p>Discussions have been taking place and are ongoing with a number of health insurance providers and professional bodies.</p>
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Time to completion: Ongoing discussions.
Responsibility lies with: NCOR Chair, Research Officer and members of NCOR.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1st October, 2003 – 30th September, 2004

INCOME

GOsC	£28,000-00
BOA	£2,000-00
Accredited Colleges	£8,000-00
TOTAL	£38,000-00

EXPENDITURE

Administration

Consumables	£1750-00
Postage and telephone	£737-00

Salaries

Administrative support (J Ingles)	£210-00
Research Officer (C Fawkes)	£15040-00

Travel Costs

GOsC Conferences and NCOR business	£1637-00
GOsC conference speakers	£335-00

Computer Equipment

Purchase of equipment	£1021-00
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TOTAL £20730-00

SURPLUS £17,270-00.

Appendix

Background to the development of the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR) and the draft strategic plan for osteopathic research.

The National Council for Osteopathic Research was constituted in 2003 in order to explore and assure the place that osteopathy has to play in Healthcare. The Council was established by the General Osteopathic Council, the British Osteopathic Association and all the recognised teaching colleges within the United Kingdom.

A chairman for the National Council for Osteopathic Research was appointed on 1st March, 2003 (Professor Ann Moore). Briefly the role of Chairman includes the following:

1. Chair and lead meetings of NCOR.
2. Work with stakeholders to establish the research mission and objectives of NCOR.
3. Lead NCOR towards achieving its mission.
4. Facilitate contact and liaise with funding bodies, government departments, foundations, Healthcare councils, research councils and institutes of Higher Education.

The National Council for Osteopathic Research has met regularly since March to discuss its operation but its first major task has been to produce a draft five-year strategic plan for the development of osteopathic research within the United Kingdom. Rather than a prescriptive and directive plan, the strategy constitutes a framework within which osteopathic research can develop and flourish.

The Development of the Strategic Plan

In order to seek views on research from the osteopathic profession a questionnaire (see appendix 1) was circulated to regional and special interest groups as well as members of the National Council for Osteopathic Research. The responses to the questionnaire were analysed descriptively and thematically. A summary is to be found in Appendix 3. The responses to the questionnaire were used to inform a Strategic Planning Event which took place in October 2003. The participants in the Strategic Planning Event are listed in Appendix 4.

The programme for the event and worksheets used throughout the two days are to be found in Appendix 5.

Aims of the Strategic Planning Event

The Strategic Planning Event aimed to achieve the following:

1. To establish a vision statement summarising what it is hoped can be achieved in five years in terms of osteopathic research development.
2. To establish a set of mission statements for the National Council for Osteopathic Research which will contribute to the attainment of the vision for the future.
3. To identify five main strategic areas for development by the National Council for Osteopathic Research.

4. To identify goals for each of the identified strategic areas.
5. To develop action plans for each of the identified goals.

A further aim was to identify any infrastructure needing to be put in place in order to support the action plans described.

The Strategy

Vision Statement for osteopathic research in the next five years.

The development of a profession-wide research culture which is inclusive, robust, credible, has national and increasingly international impact and benefits for osteopathic teaching, learning and patient care.

National Council for Osteopathic Research

1. To establish and develop a comprehensive information resource for osteopathic research in order to promote a mutual research dialogue within the osteopathic profession and with other related professions.
2. To create a forum that will develop and nurture a pan-professional osteopathic research culture, facilitate linkage of research to practice and identify national research priorities.
3. To develop a research governance framework and code of good practice in research for osteopathy which links with frameworks already developed by the National Health Service and the Research funding councils.
4. To increase and improve the profile of osteopathic research at national and international levels with policy makers, HEIs, the NHS and fund-holders.
5. To increase collaboration in research amongst osteopathic providers and HEIs nationally and with like minded researchers internationally to improve the teaching, learning and research nexus and the quality of osteopathic research generally.
6. To improve the quality and quantity of research outputs.
7. To develop appropriate channels for research dissemination e.g. websites, journals etc.
8. To identify and nurture sources of funding for research activities.

Goals and Action Plans:

Mission Statement No. 1

Establish and develop a comprehensive information resource for osteopathic research in order to promote a mutual research dialogue within the osteopathic profession and with other related professions.

Area for development

Undertake a rolling stock-take of existing UK and internationally based osteopathic research which has taken place since 1990.

- Goal 1: Identify sources of information in respect of osteopathic research.
- Goal 2: Identify sites where osteopathic research has recently and is currently taking place.
- Goal 3: Develop a classification system for osteopathic research.
- Goal 4: Develop an advice system for researchers in order to help networking of like minded researchers both at national and international level.
- Goal 5: Monitor as an ongoing activity undergraduate, masters and doctoral students' research output.
- Goal 6: Enable all the above information to be available to osteopaths within the United Kingdom and abroad.

Major responsibility lies with: the research development officer.

Time to full development: 2 years.

Detailed action plan:

1. Identify sources and sites carrying out research - members of NCOR and the Research Officer (by March 2004).
2. Outline the content of the information resource - Research Officer and Chairman of NCOR (by April/May 2004).
3. Develop a classification system for Osteopathic Research and begin populating the information resource - Research Officer (January to November 2004).

Mission Statement No. 2

Create a forum that will develop and nurture a pan-professional osteopathic research culture, facilitate linkage of research to practice and identify national research priorities.

Area for Development:

Develop avenues for the exchange of information and ideas in relation to osteopathic research and the use of evidence in everyday osteopathic practice.

- Goal 1: Present and discuss the draft strategic research plan with osteopaths at regional conferences in 2004 and establish through interactive workshops and seminars osteopaths' needs and desires in relation to research and evidence based practice.
- Goal 2: Increase the information flow and exchange re: research via electronic and printed media which is dynamic and interactive. Initially this is to be

accomplished by the insertion of a four page supplement in *The Osteopath* carrying research and evidence based practice news.

Goal 3: Establish the viability of a system of local hubs of research active practitioners who will then feed into the information flow seen in goal 2 above.

Major responsibility lies with: members of NCOR and the Research Officer.

Timescale: comments, presentations and discussions of draft strategic plan - April 2004.

Set up the insert in *The Osteopath*: Spring 2004.

Establish hubs of research active practitioners following 2004 regional conferences.

Timescale: During June-December 2004.

Detailed Action Plan:

1. Set up programme group with responsibility for detailed planning of regional conference – NCOR members and the General Osteopathic Council by 2003/4.
2. Input into the NCOR website planning to create dynamic information exchange via research officer, also use monthly four page insert into *The Osteopath*.
3. Research Officer to carry out identification of existing hubs form larger practices, and/or regions in terms of:
 - Teaching role.
 - Research activity.

The start up conferences will be held to identify areas devoid of research activity, the Research Officer and members of NCOR to encourage development of new research hubs. This will be ongoing from the end of start up conferences in 2004.

4. Explore section 63 funding or alternate sources from PCTs - Research Officer.
5. Offer osteopaths access to advisory centres for methodological support and advice - from January 2005, explore potential advisory centres in HEIs and colleges of osteopathy.

Major responsibility: Research Officer and Chair of NCOR.

Mission Statement No. 3

Develop a research governance framework and code of good practice in research for osteopathy which links with frameworks already developed by the National Health Service and Research Councils.

Areas for Development:

Relate existing research governance and ethics codes of practice to osteopathic research cultures.

Goal 1: Identify and collect existing and relevant research governance frameworks.

- Goal 2: Produce and publish definitive guidelines for osteopathic research/governance.
- Goal 3: Communicate and promote the use of these guidelines within the osteopathic education and practice.
- Goal 4: Establish a research governance review committee to ensure research proposals meet the identified and produced guidelines.

Principal responsibility lies with: members of NCOR and the Research Officer.

Time to completion: commencing discussions December 2003, research governance framework in place by winter 2004.

Detailed action plan:

- Goal 1: NCOR to establish a subgroup to develop a research governance framework (by December 2003) and identify osteopathic codes of practice in research (by February 2004). GOsC to gather information from CAHP/DoH. This information to be available at the next NCOR meeting.
- Goal 2: NCOR sub-group to sift and collate information and produce a draft document by April 2004. A set of draft guidelines to be produced by the same sub-group by May 2004. The framework is then to be taken to, the Osteopathic Institution providers by June/July 2004. Widespread consultations should follow at this stage regarding the relevance and potential implementation of the research governance framework. This consultation is to be achieved through the Regional Conferences, The Osteopath and the website by April-July 2004. The responses from this consultation phase will be collated by the Research Officer by August 2004.
- Goal 3: The Research Governance Framework (RGF) will be reviewed and adopted by September/October 2004. A booklet on research guidelines and a review of codes of practice will be produced and distributed to the profession by January 2005.
- Goal 4: Support mechanisms will be set up by NCOR and the osteopathic colleges and institutions by January 2005. A research governance committee will be established by NCOR and professional experts by January 2005.

Mission Statement No. 4

Increase and improve the profile of osteopathic research at national and international levels with policy makers, HEIs, NHS and fund-holders.

Area for Development:

Explore multiple avenues for dissemination of information concerning osteopathic research and the use of evidence based practice.

- Goal 1: Develop an initial research website presence. Key features to include:
- news
 - press releases
 - links to other research and osteopathic websites

Responsibility lies with: Research Officer and members of NCOR.

Time to completion: between 6 months and 2 years.

- Goal 2: Identify and prioritise influential contacts:
- Identify existing NCOR contacts.
 - Circulate start up conference information e.g. website.
 - Circulate NCOR's annual report.
 - Meetings with the Chair of NCOR.
 - Press releases/adverts for NCOR, start up conferences, osteopathic media.

Responsibility lies with: Chairman of NCOR, Research Officer and other members of NCOR.

- Goal 3: Explore the mechanisms for imparting information into HEIs and in Healthcare consultations, i.e. evidence based practice.

Responsibility lies with: NCOR stakeholders and the Research Officer.

Time to completion: 12 to 18 months.

- Goal 4: Identify successful areas of osteopathic provision and research and promote these through wide information dissemination and identify and prioritise influential decision makers:
- Website and appropriate links
 - Press releases
 - Tool kits for practitioners
 - Meetings with identified contacts (drawing on existing contacts)

Responsibility lies with: Research Officer and members of NCOR.

Time to completion: 2 years.

- Goal 5: Explore the development of a high quality UK/internationally driven research journal for osteopaths.

Responsibility lies with: Chair of NCOR, the editors of all UK based journals and representatives of NCOR.

Time to completion: 3 to 6 months, operational within 2 years.

- Goal 6: Website to be further developed:
- To facilitate dissemination of research information.
 - Serve as a resource to provide information.
 - To encourage submissions to conferences and journals.
 - To act as a shop window for osteopathic research and evidence based practice.

Responsibility lies with: Research Officer and members of NCOR.

Time to development: 6-8 months, ongoing and completion: 2 years and thereafter requiring routine maintenance and updating.

Mission Statement No. 6

To improve the quality and quantity of research outputs.

- Goal 1: Increase the general understanding of research principles amongst osteopaths.
- Expand the undergraduate curriculum in terms of research content and the quality of research activities.
 - Increase the provision of research continuing professional development courses by institutions (must ensure standards of academic level).
- Goal 2: Increase the collaboration between research groups and HEIs.
- Increase network and fora sharing experiences in research.
 - Encourage researchers within institutions to collaborate and establish a working research culture.
- Goal 3: Increase the number of postgraduate programmes which are research based and are relevant to osteopaths e.g. MSc, MRes, MPhil/PhD and clinical doctorate.
- Increase recognition and assistance provided to individual and aspiring researchers.
- Goal 4: Increase the frequency of undergraduate and Masters level dissertations which are published in peer reviewed journals and peer reviewed conference proceedings.

Principal responsibility lies with: NCOR in discussion with Osteopathic education providers and existing osteopathic researchers.

Time frame: ongoing from spring 2004.

Mission Statement No. 7

Develop appropriate channels for research dissemination e.g. website, journals, etc.

- Goal 1:
- Develop an osteopathic research website or web presence at an early stage.
 - Attached to an existing website.
 - Give consideration to branding
 - Website to include basic information/news, vision and mission statements of NCOR
 - Early links with organisations and resources and research databases.
 - E-mail discussion groups.
 - NCOR news and research news from regional groups, special interest groups and possibly osteopathic research hubs.

Responsibility lies with: NCOR stakeholders and staff of the host website and the Research Officer.

Time scale: development to begin over next 6 months.

- Goal 2: Further development of the website in the medium to longer terms.
- Options are to host, fund, maintain and design the website (could be expensive).
 - Identify examples of good practice.
 - Identify links with other websites.
 - Explore possible packages available from Healthcare publishing houses.
 - New research database to be included on the website, e.g. to include recent abstracts of newly published work.

Responsibility lies with: ongoing work by stakeholders and the Research Officer.

Timescale: over a period of 18 months.

- Goal 3: Develop a high quality research journal for osteopaths.
- Select a publisher and editor.
 - Explore relationship with the Journal of Osteopathic Medicine (General Osteopathic Council).
 - Journal should be peer reviewed and work towards gaining an impact factor and listing in Index Medicus and Science Citation Index.

Principle responsibility lies with: NCOR and the General Osteopathic Council.

Timescale: Negotiations to commence in January and early discussions to take place within first 6 months of 2004. Time to Index Medicus rating and impact factor: approximately 3 years.

- Goal 4: Regular research presence in The Osteopath
- Develop a newsletter initially in hard copy, possibly published in The Osteopath but later to be incorporated into the website.
 - Produce an annual NCOR report for wide dissemination which celebrates research developments, recent work, research publication and the increasing use of evidence based practice within the osteopathic profession.

Responsibility lies with: Chairman of NCOR and Research Officer.

Timescale: Develop profile over the first year (2004).

- Goal 5: Ensure regular presence of NCOR at all osteopathic conferences.
- Sponsor selected presentations.
 - Include research workshops.
 - Identify major conferences and circulate short reports following the conferences.

Responsibility lies with: All members of NCOR and the Research Officer.

- Goal 6: Develop an NCOR annual report.
- With an interesting format.
 - Incorporating national research achievements.
 - For wide circulation.

Responsibility lies with: Research Officer and Chairman of NCOR.

Mission Statements Nos. 5 and 8

The members of NCOR expressed the view that they felt that these mission statements could be developed further at forthcoming meetings. There had been insufficient time and numbers of participants at the strategic planning event to develop these mission statements to their satisfaction.

Summary of Action Points in Draft Strategic Plan.

1. Initial Website Development

- a) Act as a shop window for osteopathic research.
- b) Basic NCOR news, information, mission statements and annual report.
- c) Information and press releases.
- d) Research news from regional groups, special interest groups and osteopathic research hubs.
- e) Links to other research and osteopathic websites.
- f) Circulate conference information.
- g) Encourage submission to conferences and journals.
- h) E-mail discussion group.
- i) Short reports from major osteopathic conferences.
- j) Appropriate research resources will be placed on the website at a later date.

2. Creating Research Resources for Osteopaths

- a) Database of completed osteopathic research.
- b) Database of topics and sites of ongoing osteopathic research – national and international.
- c) Facilitate networking between like minded researchers.
- d) Monitor ongoing research output at undergraduate, masters and doctoral student levels.
- e) Publish definitive research governance framework for osteopaths to be used within education and practice modelled on existing frameworks.
- f) Workshops for training on the website.
- g) Research tutorials on the website e.g. evidence based practice.

3. Increasing and Improving Research Output for Osteopaths

- a) Increase information flow relating to research via a monthly 4 page insert into The Osteopath.
- b) Development of high quality UK/internationally driven research journal for osteopaths.
- c) Encourage the publication of increased numbers of undergraduate and masters' level dissertations.
- d) Improve the quality and quantity of research output.

4. Developing Research Activity and Research Profile

- a) Discuss strategic plan at regional conferences in 2004.
- b) Conferences to identify areas devoid of research activity.
- c) Increase understanding of research principles among osteopaths.
- d) Identify osteopaths' needs in relation to research e.g. methodology, statistics training/advisory centres.
- e) Increase provision of high quality research CPD courses by institutions.
- f) Increase the number of research based and relevant postgraduate programmes e.g. MSc, MRes, MPhil/PhD and clinical doctorate.
- g) Establish a research governance review committee to monitor research proposals.
- h) Identify and support hubs of new and established research active practitioners.

5. Osteopathic Research Profile

- a) Raise the profile of osteopathic research nationally and internationally.
- b) Explore methods for imparting information into HEIs.
- c) Promote osteopathic research and evidence based practice with policy makers, NHS and

- fund holders.
- d) Increase collaboration between research groups and HEIs by networking and establishing a working research culture.
 - e) Ensure NCOR presence at all osteopathic conferences.

6. Creating Funding Opportunities

- a) Identify and nurture sources of funding for research activities e.g. NHS, funding bodies and HEIs.

The Way Forward

A number of stages of consultation have been planned in order to allow as much discussion as possible around the framework which has developed so far. Following the initial development at the Strategic Planning Event, the draft Strategic Plan will be presented to NCOR and once approved will be circulated to all major stakeholder institutions for consultation and comment. At the same time the plan will also be sent to special interest groups and regional groups for discussion and debate, again calling for comments and suggestions as to how the plans can be improved. The Strategic Plan will be revised according to the comments received and will then be presented at the regional conferences which will commence in April 2004 and will go on until July 2004. Workshops concerning the research framework will be held at each of the regional conferences in 2004 and again suggestions and comments on the research strategy framework will be taken into consideration in producing a final draft. The final draft will then be published in the Osteopathic Press, calling for comments from as many osteopaths as possible and once these comments have been received and the framework modified accordingly the document will be disseminated as a definitive document.