

National Council for



Osteopathic Research

Annual Report

2004 – 2005

October 2005

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

This is the second 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 20. 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 (page 18) 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 second report of the National Council of Osteopathic Research. Since my appointment in March, 2003 NCOR has made significant progress towards achieving many of its stated objectives.

NCOR meetings have continued to take place approximately every two months; some new faces have now joined as representatives. I am pleased to welcome Dr Heather Hinckley, Mrs Brenda Mullinger, Ms Reena Joshi and Mr Steven Vogel to NCOR. I would also like to place on record my thanks to Ms Kate Nash, Dr Nick Walters and Dr Peter Collins for the valuable contribution they have made to the early stages of the development of NCOR. 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. A full list of current NCOR members can be found in the appendix.

We were delighted to have been asked to give a presentation at the British Osteopathic Association (BOA) Annual Convention in October, 2004. I enjoyed an interesting day listening to a diverse range of speakers and meeting many more members of the profession whom I had not encountered at the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) regional conferences. I was able to give more information about NCOR to the profession, its progress and some of its future plans.

The first combined osteopathy, physiotherapy and chiropractic student conference took place at the British School of Osteopathy last October. The presentations were quite varied in their subject matter, but were of a consistently good standard. I look forward to attending the second conference in Bournemouth on Saturday 15th October, 2005 and judging the presentations for awards sponsored by Elsevier and Manual Therapy Journal. The prize winners will be invited to publish their abstracts in Manual Therapy Journal.

I have continued to visit stakeholder organisations throughout the year in order to develop first hand insight into the workings of these organisations. I was able to visit BCOM in July of last year and the series of visits continued at Oxford Brookes University on 20th September, 2004. It was a pleasure to be able to meet a number of the staff including Mr Graham Sharman, the Principal of the programme of osteopathy, Mr Laurence Kirk and Professor David Foxcroft, Director of Research and Professor of Health Care Practice. Robin Kirk acted as host when I visited the LSO on 5th May, 2005; I also had the opportunity to meet Derrick Edwards who has recently been appointed editor of the British Osteopathic Journal. I also visited the ESO on 5th October, 2005 and was delighted to meet Renzo Molinari and other members of staff including Christian Fossum and Dévan Rajendran. These visits will continue into the autumn and winter period to include BSO, LCOM, COET and SIOM. The visits give individuals based in these organisations the opportunity to ask any questions about the functions of NCOR, 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 further meetings with 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. A meeting with the HSA was held in December, 2004 to attempt to secure funding of research degrees for osteopaths. Unfortunately, HSA have found it necessary to cut back on their funding initiatives and have reported they will be unable to fund any postgraduate education for osteopaths. Contact has also been made with BUPA; BackCare and BUPA have indicated that they would welcome good quality research proposals from osteopaths

Negotiations, which began last year to develop a new peer reviewed high quality international journal of osteopathy, have come to fruition. The first edition of the International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine was published by Elsevier in March, 2005. Dr Janine Leach, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Brighton has been appointed as English editor of the journal. I have taken on the role of editorial advisor to the editorial board of IJOM. Carol Fawkes, NCOR's Research Officer, has also been appointed to the editorial advisory board.

Meetings have also been held this year with a senior representative from the Council for Research Ethics Committees (COREC) to explore the possibility of establishing a research ethics committee for the osteopathic profession. Discussions with osteopaths have highlighted the difficulties encountered by members of the profession engaged in practice based research to obtain an ethical opinion. Inevitably this has an effect on the publication of findings – an ethical imperative for research. In order to avoid situations where osteopaths are conducting research without ethical guidance, the establishment of a research ethics committee would appear to be a valuable facility for the whole profession. It is also envisaged that such a committee could act as a source of independent opinion for contentious projects encountered by the osteopathic education institutions (OEs). It would need to include an independent Chair, a non-osteopath, sufficient lay members and professional members to provide a sensible quorum. The Chair would be urged to work on a consensus system rather than a voting system. It has also been suggested, in accordance with Lord Warner's recommendations, that expenses (locum fees) should be paid for professional members and travel (and childcare costs, if applicable) should be paid for lay members. The cost of reimbursement combined with training inevitably has a financial implication for all the stakeholders to consider.

NB This committee would not take the place of ethics committees that are already in place in OEs or of LRECs used by osteopaths who wish to conduct research in the NHS setting using NHS property, patients or staff.

The Research Governance Framework is nearing completion after serial amendments made following feedback from stakeholders. The time stakeholders have taken to read and respond to several drafts of this document has been extremely valuable. A brief summary of the Research Governance Framework for osteopaths working in private practice has also been prepared; both documents will be available on the website (copies of both documents are appended).

The NCOR website went live in June, 2005. This valuable resource is updated fortnightly and gives information concerning NCOR meetings, research hub meetings and research opportunities. A series of evidence based practice tutorials that have been

published in *The Osteopath* are now present on the site in PDF form. Further tutorials will be placed on the website as they are completed. Information on courses and conferences also appear on the site; these reflect courses that are likely to be relevant and interesting to all practising osteopaths and not exclusively related to research. The site can be found at www.ncor.org.uk.

A network of research hubs is slowly being established throughout the country. Hubs have been formed in response to members of the profession expressing their interest at the 2004 series of GOsC regional conferences. I attended a series of introductory meetings in May and July and all of the groups have expressed their interest in developing a systematic data collection tool for osteopathy. Groups are now established in South Wales, Bristol, Exeter, London, Leeds and Oxford. The attendance since the initial round of hub meetings has grown considerably. All groups responded to the need for a systematic data collection tool to inform them about their own practice, and to provide information on audit topics, standard setting and identify research priorities. All groups have also remarked on the need for training in research methods to feel more confident in dealing with research literature and the application of such evidence to practise where appropriate. Carol Fawkes maintains regular contact with the hubs. Further groups will be established in time; visits have yet to be made to Ireland and Scotland to establish their hub needs. This will be addressed in the autumn.

The second strategic planning event will be held on 14th December for NCOR to revisit the first strategic plan and sign off areas accomplished (in some cases well ahead of schedule). The event will also lead to the development of a second research strategy for the next two years and members of Council will be invited to attend this event and we hope they will join us.

A number of key issues have arisen in terms of research and development for NCOR this year

1. The need for a systematic data collection (SDC) tool to be developed by consensus amongst members of the profession. This could offer several benefits to individual practitioners as well as to the profession itself e.g. a comprehensive database would be available for use in practice for practise development for the establishment of audit questions, research priorities and for standard setting. The dataset would also offer provision for information to insurance companies, medico-legal companies and healthcare funders.

In addition the systematic data collected would provide a sound basis for the development of appropriate research questions to ensure that research funding for osteopathic research is not wasted.

A third feature of the SDC is that it provides an ongoing basis for intra-professional discussion and development as has been seen in other professions.

NCOR has already begun the work on SDC within the hub development process. We would like to increase the scale of this activity. A proposal/business plan will be developed in the spring subject to positive feed back being given by Council. NCOR has not at this stage dismissed the possibility of getting external funding for this development but since SDC is almost a grey area between audit and research at present, it may be difficult to obtain funding from the conventional funders.

2. The second issue that has arisen concerns adverse incidents; obviously it is becoming an imperative within the profession to do some work on this area. Some work has already been done in the musculoskeletal physiotherapy and chiropractic worlds and we propose the creation of a sub-group to lead the development of a protocol on adverse incidents in the osteopathic profession which, on completion, can be submitted for funding to an appropriate funding source hopefully within the next year.

The sub group will co-opt individuals from the osteopathic and other professions to establish the protocol.

3. The growth of the number of osteopaths with doctoral level qualifications is seen as a priority for development by NCOR. The profession is growing in its intellectual strength; it is an all graduate profession and a number of osteopaths have taken Masters level work. There are also a small number who have completed, or are in the process of completing, doctoral degrees. This number needs to rise. It is hoped that it may be possible in the future to offer research studentships for individuals who fulfil the requirements for entry to such awards. At present there is little funding available to support doctoral studies within the osteopathic profession.

The advantages of research studentships are

1. They are reasonably low cost
2. Studentship application systems offer the advantage of selectivity

All the research carried out in these doctoral studentships will contribute to the evidence base for the profession.

Recommendations:

1. Some issues this year have arisen related to the relationship between NCOR and the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC). It appears that NCOR is regarded as an arm's length committee by members of Council. This situation, in the best interest of all the stakeholders, probably needs to be re-thought to avoid wheels grinding to a halt.
2. It is clear that research is funded through the GOsC and other associated organisations. NCOR would ask for the sake of the profession and for NCOR itself that clear guidelines and systems are put in place for the submission of proposals for funding and that a transparent system, preferably involving NCOR, is put in place to assess funding applications for research.
 - We would ask that Council considers as a matter of principle whether it wishes to fund osteopathic research at all and if so in what way. i.e.
 - a) not at all,
 - b) on a commissioning basis
 - c) on a grant awarding basis
 - d) a mixture of b) and c)

- e) funding of training events in research and development for members of the osteopathic profession
- It would be helpful to know if GOsC intends to make a regular financial commitment to the above activities or not. It would be useful to know if and when this decision is made that transparency is applied throughout so that all members of the profession are aware of what is available to them.
- Discussions regarding the establishment of an ethics committee need to be held and funding sources for this considered. We would welcome advice about who should be involved in this debate.
- Having developed the Research Governance Framework (RGF), the profession needs to consider the implementation of the RGF. This is particularly the case for the osteopathic colleges who are of key importance in making sure that research carried out by large numbers of junior researchers is at an appropriate level and of appropriate quality.
- That Council reconsiders its position in relation to the funding of research degrees.

Professor Ann Moore
Chair of NCOR

Research Officer's Report

Since the last report was published, a great deal has been achieved by NCOR in meeting its stated objectives. The various areas in which both achievements have been made and work is ongoing are described below.

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. Increasing numbers of enquiries have arrived from osteopaths trying to locate research now that they know NCOR exists. Most of the profession do not have access to an Athens password to locate research; the establishment of such a facility has been requested many times by osteopaths in private practice. The numbers of enquiries received during the past year from within and outside the profession totals 208.

I have also been fortunate to be asked to act as an external examiner at the final year presentations by the students at the British School of Osteopathy and the British College of Osteopathic Medicine. The students chose some challenging and absorbing research topics delivered by many without any noticeable traces of nerves. It was a pleasure to attend both days.

Communication: The NCOR website was launched in June, 2005 (www.ncor.org.uk). The site is slowly being populated with information that is useful for both the practising osteopath and the osteopathic researcher. The site will contain more information as time progresses and suggestions concerning further inclusions on the site are welcomed. The website will be updated regularly to give current information about conferences, calls for papers for conferences and conference reports. Eventually, there will also be information about research courses, funding opportunities, research currently being conducted and results of research that has been completed. Articles on aspects of research that originally appeared in *The Osteopath* have been progressively placed on the website on PDF form; many osteopaths and staff from osteopathic educational institutions have commented that they have been very helpful.

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 practise. The database of completed osteopathic research will also be accessible via the website. A great deal of care has gone into planning the website to allow it to be a significant marketing tool not just for osteopathic research but for the profession as a whole.

The Osteopath remains a source of communication for those osteopaths who do not have internet access. A series of articles have been prepared throughout the past year concerning various aspects of evidence based practice. This will continue in the near future to assist in raising the confidence of osteopaths when dealing with research. The

British Osteopathic Association also supports NCOR by allowing us to communicate with the profession via the pages of *Osteopathy Today*.

Enquiries about completed research to inform healthcare providers continue to grow. A growing number of enquiries are also being received concerning available research courses at all levels from certificate to PhD. The climate for funding research remains challenging with some funding bodies changing their criteria and reducing their outlay; a considerable amount of time continues to be spent trying to locate funding bodies and charities suitable for applications from osteopaths.

Research Hubs: A series of research hubs have been established around the country. Groups have yet to be established in Scotland and Ireland, but this will be addressed as quickly as possible in 2006. All of the research groups that have met have agreed to become involved with the development of a systematic data collection tool. The research needs of each group are slowly being established and a series of workshops are planned to address these needs. Numbers of osteopaths attending hub meetings and wanting to be added to the information list concerning hub activities is steadily growing. The initial round of hub meetings had attendees:-

South Wales: 7
Plymouth: 10
London: 7
Leeds: 9
Oxford: 8

The second round of hub meetings, when work commenced on the development of the systematic data collection tool had attendees:-

South Wales: 7
Exeter group: 12*
Bristol group: 14*
London: 10
Oxford: 9

* The Plymouth group divided to establish meetings in Exeter and Bristol to make travelling to meetings easier for osteopaths after a day in practise.

The groups' members are progressively getting to know each other and meetings are enjoyable occasions. Members are interacting well and welcoming the opportunity to discuss many research and clinical issues relevant to osteopathic practise. Discussion and design concerning the data collection tool is progressing well with members demonstrating more confidence in discussing the issues involved. Details of the hub meetings can be found on the website www.ncor.org.uk.

The **Research Governance and Ethics Framework** (RGF) is nearing the final stage of development. 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 framework will initially be developed for the use of the osteopathic education institutions; a shorter summary has been prepared in a user friendly format for the use of practising osteopaths to introduce them to the RGF.

Research Conferences: The opportunity arose in September, 2004 to attend the 5th International Conference on Advance in Osteopathic Research at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. This combined venture with the British College of Osteopathic Medicine (BCOM) produced a diverse range of very interesting osteopathic research presentations. Delegates attended from England, Australia and the USA. Next year the conference will return to London; BCOM will host the event on March, April. Later in the year, the conference “Developing Research Strategies in Complementary and Alternative Medicine was held in Southampton. This proved to be an interesting conference but did underline the fact that CAM is increasingly using the model of the randomised controlled trials to grow its evidence base. Details of other conferences and calls for papers will be posted regularly on the NCOR website. The BOA annual convention followed shortly after this; each year the convention goes from strength to strength. It was gratifying to have the opportunity to meet many osteopaths from whom I had received enquiries throughout the year.

Meetings of the Prince of Wales Foundation for Integrated Health have been noticeable by their absence in the past year due to staff changes within that organisation. A new calendar of meetings is being proposed for the coming year and osteopathy will continue to be represented within this group. A spirit of sharing resources and expertise is fostered at these meetings. It is also helpful to learn about the research activities of other CAM professions. Most of the professions represented i.e. aromatherapy, reflexology, homeopathy, acupuncture and traditional Chinese herbalism are fortunate to benefit from research funding and awards coming from within their own organisations.

Future Work: In many ways, the most exciting times for NCOR are just beginning. 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 published and unpublished osteopathic research and to see the research hubs grow in strength and activities. The research hubs provide the perfect forum for many more osteopaths to become involved in research at a level at which they feel comfortable; the forum also allows osteopaths to have a voice in the type of research they feel is needed from a clinical perspective.

Carol Fawkes
Research Development Officer
NCOR

NCOR Achievements In Relation to the Draft Strategic Plan

Mission Statement 1

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

Mission Statement 2

Area for development: Develop avenues for the exchange of information and ideas in relation to osteopathic research and the use of research evidence in everyday osteopathic practice.	NCOR Action: A series of research hubs have been developed. Hubs are currently established in South Wales, Leeds, London, Oxford, Bristol, Haywards Heath and Exeter. Further hubs are planned in the UK, Scotland and Eire.
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Timescale: June – December, 2004. **Responsibility lies with NCOR Chair and the Research Officer.**

Mission Statement 3

Area for development: Develop a Research Governance and Framework and ethics code of practice to osteopathic research cultures.	NCOR Action: The Research Governance and Ethics Framework is now in its final draft following constructive feedback from stakeholders. A summary guide to the Research Governance Framework has been prepared for osteopaths working in private practice. Both publications will be available on the website www.ncor.org.uk .
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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>The NCOR website, hosted by the University of Brighton, went live in June, 2005 and is updated regularly by the Research Officer.</p> <p>The first edition of the International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine was published by Elsevier in March, 2005.</p> <p>The possibility of an osteopathic research association and newsletter has been suggested in the past. This may be helpful to be distributed to hub members in the future so that all hubs are informed of each other's activities. A version should also be available electronically .</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>The current research priorities of large fund holding bodies and charitable organisations e.g. HSA, Department of Health, Cerebra, ARC and MRC are being identified.</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 of research based post graduate programmes. Increase the frequency of publication of undergraduate and MSc dissertations.</p>	<p>NCOR action:</p> <p>Articles on evidence-based practice continue to be prepared for publication in The Osteopath. These articles are also available on the website in PDF form as evidence-based practice tutorials.</p> <p>Discussions have been held with BackCare and HSA to discuss strategic collaboration and funding for osteopathic research degrees. BUPA have also been approached to discover if they would be receptive to submissions from osteopaths.</p> <p>A proposal has also been submitted for consideration by the General Osteopathic Council for research studentship funding.</p>
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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> <p>3 proposals for research funding have been submitted to the General Osteopathic Council.</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, 2004 to 30th September, 2005

INCOME

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

EXPENDITURE

Administration

Consumables including Postage and telephone £297-00

Salaries

Administrative support (S Matthias) £444-00
Research Officer (C Fawkes) £26,715-00

Travel Costs

NCOR business £1,637-00

Computer Equipment

Purchase of equipment £2,007-00

TOTAL £32,234-00

SURPLUS £5,766-00*

* The surplus is lower than last year. This reflects the fact that the financial statement includes the payment of one full year's salary to the Research Officer. A payment of six month's salary was paid last year due to the timing of the Research Officer taking up her post.

Additional travel costs associated with visits to research hub meetings have also added to expenditure.

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 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.

Constitution of National Council for Osteopathic Research

Chair	Professor Ann Moore
The British College of Osteopathic Medicine (BCOM)	Dr Nick Walters Succeeded in May, 2005 by Dr Heather Hinckley
British Osteopathic Association (BOA)	Mr Michael Watson
The British School of Osteopathy (BSO)	Ms Kate Nash, succeeded in June, 2005 by Dr Martin Collins
The College of Osteopaths (COET)	Dr Janine Leach
The European School of Osteopathy	Dr Peter Collins succeeded in March, 2005 by Mrs Brenda Mullinger
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)	Ms Reena Joshi
Research Officer	Carol Fawkes

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. 5 – see note page 26

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.