



Early data from PROMs

An evidence base for your practice development

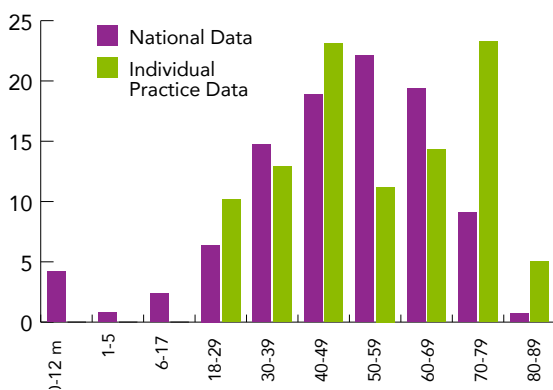
Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) questionnaires are increasingly being used across the whole of healthcare as an acceptable way of quickly and easily recording a patient’s own opinion of the effect of their treatment. Standardised and reliable, PROMs allows individual osteopaths to collect data on their practice and compare it to a national benchmark. It also provides a valuable evidence base for the profession.

The PROMs app, developed by the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR), has been in use over the past year, and a summary of the national findings are presented here. The data for one anonymous osteopath has been provided to show how data can be used to inform practice development.

Patient age

The app contains 16 questions in total, including initial demographic data. Figure 1 identifies that the example practice does not have any paediatric patients, and has a larger population of patients between 70 and 90. At present, 18% of the population are aged 65 and over, with 2.4% aged 85 and over (ONS, 2017). This data indicates some CPD opportunities for this practice, and also the need to consider practical issues associated with older patients e.g. mobility issues.

Figure 1.

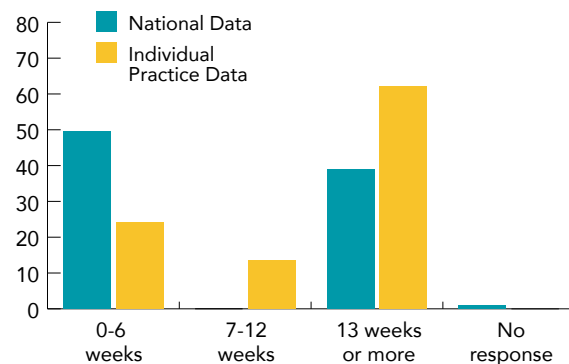


Duration of symptoms

Figure 2 shows how long patients have had their current symptoms when they report for their initial consultation. This practice sees less patients presenting with acute symptoms, and far more with chronic symptoms. There are several issues of interest to consider from this data including:

- Managing expectations of recovery for patients presenting with longstanding symptoms
- Communication with local healthcare providers emphasising the importance of timely referral and management of symptoms to prevent them becoming chronic
- Examining access to appointments at the practice to ensure that patients are seen in a timely manner

Figure 2.

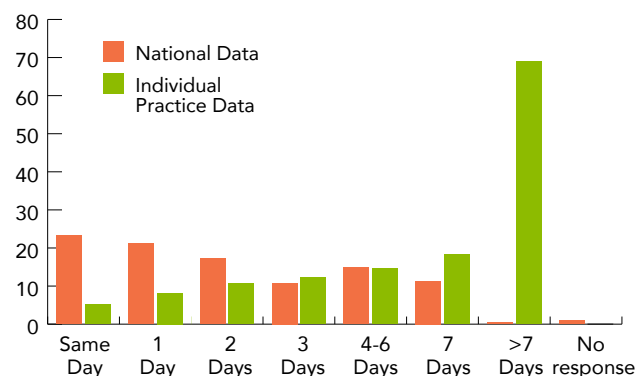


Waiting time until first appointment

Waiting time data is explored in Figure 3 from the PROMs data. In this practice, waiting times are longer than in the national dataset. It might be worth considering some solutions, such as:

- Leaving an appointment slot free per day to allow patients to be seen in a more timely manner
- Increasing practice opening hours if this is possible
- Increasing the number of osteopaths working at the practice to promote easier access to appointments

Figure 3.

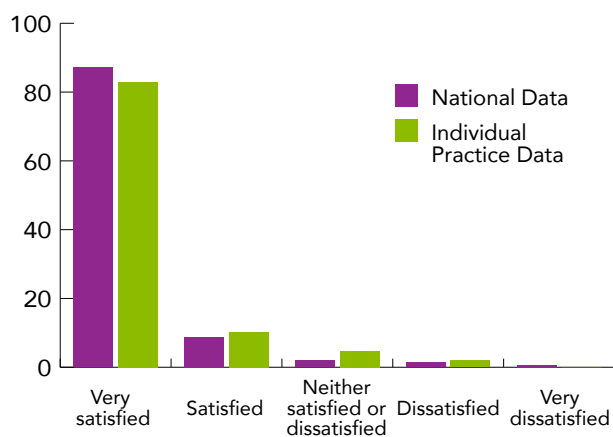




Patient satisfaction at six weeks post-treatment

Patient satisfaction is one outcome measured in follow up questions in the app. High numbers of patients state they are 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' in both national and practice datasets. Slightly fewer patients express they are 'very satisfied' in the national dataset, but slightly more report being 'satisfied'. More patients report being "neither satisfied or dissatisfied" and "dissatisfied" in the practice dataset than in the national data. This may indicate an opportunity to conduct a clinical audit or a patient survey to explore the reasons for this. Patient satisfaction in osteopathy has been explored in a small number of publications to date and various questionnaires are available in this area of practice. (Pincus et al., 2000; Fawkes, 2007; Strutt et al., 2008).

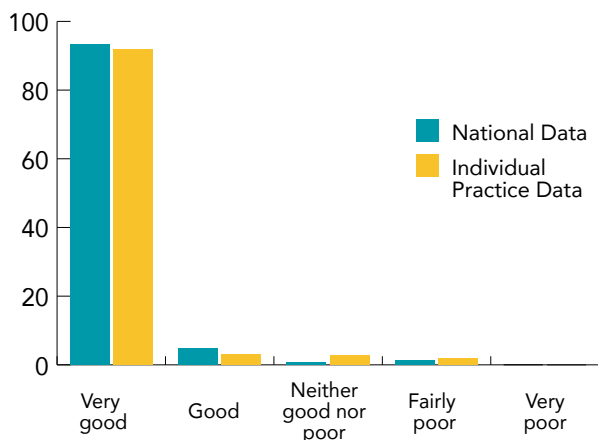
Figure 4.



Patient experience at six weeks post-treatment

A small number of studies have investigated patients' experience of osteopathic care in the UK. One study investigated patients' experience of osteopathic care in a survey to the general population (Drysdale et al, 2013a), and in a clinic attached to an osteopathic educational institution (Drysdale et al, 2013b). The data from the national and practice datasets indicate very positive patient reported experience of osteopathic care.

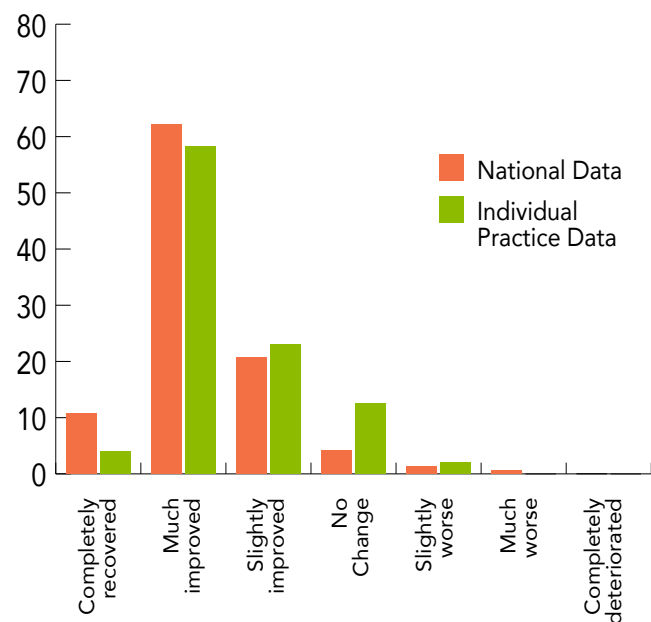
Figure 5.



Global change at six weeks post-treatment

Global change explores patients' overall response to treatment. This allows patients to provide feedback without focussing on one particular area of symptoms e.g. neck pain, or type of symptoms e.g. pain. This is an important question considering the range of treatment approaches used for different populations in osteopathic practice, and the multifocal nature of symptoms reported by patients. Once again, the data concerning global change reported by patients is very encouraging.

Figure 6.



Ongoing data collection.

Data collection using the PROMs app is continuing, and anyone can use the app in their practice. If you would like to get involved or would just like further information, contact Carol Fawkes at c.fawkes@qmul.ac.uk

References

- Drysdale IP, Rolfe KJ, Hinkley H. 'POSTE' study (Patients OSTeopathic Experience): a UK national survey of patients: Part III. *International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine* 2013a;16:e23-24.
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