



NZ OSTEO

The face is a picture of the mind with the eyes as its
interpreter - *Marcus Tullius Cicero*

Autumn 2025



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Message from the Editor:

Welcome to the Autumn issue! The board is full steam ahead, locking in speakers and finalizing plans for this year's Auckland conference. Our theme explores how traditional osteopathy can embrace the future—integrating AI-driven clinic systems and new diagnostic tools while staying true to our hands-on roots. We're also excited to introduce a dedicated research stream, bringing the latest insights in physical therapy to the conference.

We can't wait to share it all with you in September. Meanwhile, enjoy the read!

-Morgan Hancock





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Message from the Chair

Tēnā koutou, Happy New Year – though how is it April already? Easter's nearly here – anyone else craving chocolate fish and a long weekend?

Collaboration and Progress

The phrase "if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together" resonates quite nicely with all the fantastic mahi our people have been doing this past quarter to advance osteopathic care across Aotearoa. Our board has been firing on all cylinders, even with those late-night Zoom meetings! We have a fantastic team and exciting plans ahead.

Special Mentions

I would like to make a special mention to our membership, who have willingly provided input to the board on various projects:

- Concussion
- ACC pain management
- The collaborative effort to provide valuable feedback on the WMA consultation process to the Osteopathic Council.

Conference Update

Alana, our event facilitator, is crafting our conference into a very exciting lineup. We are well underway, and this year promises to be exceptional (wait until you see the research stream Kesh's team has put together – it's going to be clinic gold!). We are also very grateful for the partnership and ongoing support we have with our sponsors. The [Conference website](#) is now up!

New Members and Awards

I would like to welcome the 15 new members, including practitioners returning from overseas and graduates from Ara | Te Pūkenga's osteopathic programme.

Special recognition goes to Justine Gunther, our 2024 Emerging Practitioner, who has been brilliant in her time at ARA and is extremely deserving of this award, as you will come to learn.

ACC Update

We were not successful in securing a meeting with Julie at ACC due to internal changes within ACC. We have learned that our new ACC liaison will be Rosemary Kennedy. With any change, we aim to quickly build a relationship for our profession in this space.

Concussion Feedback

Thank you to those who provided concussion feedback. If you missed this opportunity, please let me know your credentials in this area. The link is here.

Insurance Policy Change

Effective 1 April 2025, our group insurance policy has moved from VERO Liability to QBE. This change was necessary due to VERO's refusal to assist with complaints of a non-sexual nature involving issues around physical contact or verbal consent, both inherent aspects of osteopathic practice. Please reach out to James at Affiliated for more information.

As we look forward to implementing the board strategic plan in the coming months, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to our progress. Your dedication and collaboration are invaluable, and I am excited to see what we can continue to deliver for our profession this year.

Thank you for your continued support, and I wish you all a wonderful Easter break.

—Anj Young



Integrative Osteopathy: Foundations & Future

CONFERENCE 2025

The ONZ Conference 2025, Integrative Osteopathy: Foundations & Future, is set to be a highlight of the osteopathic calendar, offering an in-depth exploration of both the enduring principles and the evolving future of osteopathy. Hosted at **JetPark Hotel & Conference Centre** in Auckland, this year's event provides a unique opportunity for practitioners to engage with expert-led discussions, hands-on workshops, and cutting-edge research presentations. The venue is conveniently located just a short distance from Auckland Airport, ensuring easy access for both local and international attendees.

The programme has been designed to cater to a broad range of interests and specialisations, with dedicated conference streams covering innovation, integration, and professional impact. Delegates will gain valuable insights from specialist speakers, including Paul Hermann, a dual-titled Advanced Exercise Rehab Osteopath and Exercise/Sports Scientist from Australia. Alongside these key presentations, interactive workshops will allow attendees to refine their skills and explore practical applications of emerging techniques. A dedicated exhibitor space will also showcase the latest advancements in physical therapy tools, and products.



*Where tradition
meets
innovation*





Looking at our future

One of the standout elements of this year's conference is its **research vignettes**, offering a snapshot of current and future-focused studies in osteopathy. These short presentations will cover a diverse range of topics, including AI-driven innovations in healthcare, the expanding role of osteopaths beyond traditional clinic settings, interdisciplinary collaborations with other healthcare professionals, and upcoming policy developments that will impact the entire profession. With osteopathy's scope of practice continuing to evolve, these research discussions will provide essential knowledge on how practitioners can adapt and position themselves within the wider healthcare landscape.

Beyond the formal sessions, the conference provides ample opportunity for networking and professional engagement. The **Friday evening welcome drinks and nibbles** will allow attendees to unwind after the opening afternoon sessions while connecting with colleagues and industry professionals.

The **conference dinner on Saturday night** is another social highlight, offering a chance to enjoy good food, great company, and lively discussions outside of the formal conference setting. For sports enthusiasts, the timing couldn't be better—an **All Blacks game will be held in Auckland on Saturday night**, making for an exciting evening option for those who wish to extend their experience beyond the conference itself.



Accommodation

Given the increased demand for accommodation due to the All Blacks game, we strongly recommend that attendees book their stay early. To assist with this, ONZ has secured a **15% discount for conference delegates at JetPark Hotel**. The special delegate code **CONZ25** can be used when booking online through the [JetPark Hotel website](#), offering discounted flexible rates on selected room types (STQ, SUK, SUT, DEK & DXT) for stays from 5th-7th September.

With a strong lineup of speakers, engaging research streams, hands-on learning opportunities, and vibrant networking events, Integrative Osteopathy: Foundations & Future promises to be an invaluable experience for osteopaths looking to deepen their knowledge, refine their skills, and connect with like-minded professionals. We look forward to welcoming you to Auckland this September for what will undoubtedly be an inspiring and dynamic event. [Early Bird Tickets are on sale now](#)



Programme

Friday 5th September:

Registration and Lunch: 12:00pm
 Afternoon Conference Session
 Evening welcome Drinks in the Lat Bar

Saturday 6th September:

Full Day Conference Sessions
 Conference Dinner 7:30pm

Sunday 7th September:

Conference Sessions to conclude by 3:30pm





The Journey to Clinical Practice

Expectation vs Reality: How I Came to Call Myself an Osteopath

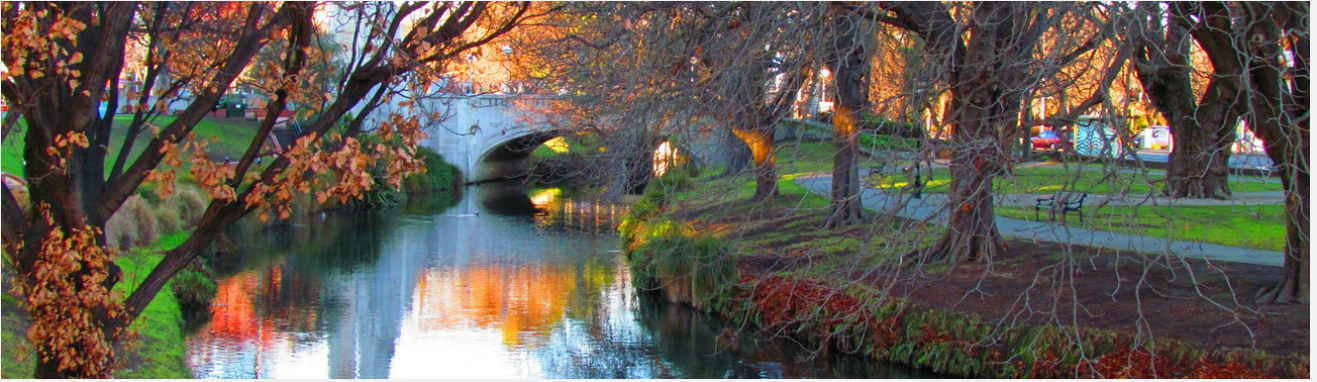
Kauri Walmsley, a recent graduate from Ara Institute of Canterbury, is now practicing at Bodylogic in New Plymouth. In this personal reflection, he shares his journey into osteopathy—from early inspiration and student life to the realities of clinical practice—and the lessons he's learning along the way.

Why do we choose a career in healthcare? The seeds of my journey into osteopathy were planted early, though they remained dormant for years. As a child, I received osteopathic treatment for recurring sports injuries, sparking a curiosity about this unique approach to healing. But it wasn't until much later, after a hip injury while surfing in Central America, that this curiosity turned into something more.

Living with persistent pain forced me to reflect on those early experiences and the relief I had once felt through osteopathic care. It was a pivotal moment. I realised I wanted to understand my body, heal my own injury, and, in the process, help others do the same.

At the time, I was living in British Columbia, Canada, and once I committed to studying osteopathy, the next challenge was figuring out where in New Zealand I could do it. Initially, Unitec appeared to be the only option, and I resigned myself to five years of being a broke student in Auckland. However, after several emails with their administration team, I learned the programme was being phased out and was no longer accepting new enrolments.

A few more web searches led me to the Ara Institute of Canterbury, which had recently launched its own osteopathy programme. Four years of student life in Christchurch seemed like a more palatable prospect, so I took the plunge.



From Student to Practitioner

When I started at Ara, I was part of only the third intake of students in a relatively new four-year study pathway. The program was still evolving, with educators balancing both teaching and refining course content at the same time. Despite the growing pains, Ara made a strong effort to involve students in shaping the curriculum, using feedback to improve the experience for future cohorts.



Four years may not sound like a long time, but a lot can happen in that period. Life rarely unfolds as planned, and unexpected challenges are inevitable. Whether it takes four, five, or even six years to qualify and register as an osteopath, the key is persistence. If you stay the course, graduation will come, but then comes the next challenge: earning a living.

Like many other osteopaths, I knew I'd likely be working as a contractor, charging a set fee per patient while giving a percentage to the clinic. In an ideal world, a fully booked schedule would provide an income beyond what most students could imagine.

However, this is where expectations and reality often clash. As I approached graduation, I heard from recent graduates about the job market, particularly in Canterbury. Because the program was based in Christchurch, the region had quickly become saturated with new osteopaths, and some were struggling just to cover their basic costs.

Yet, there was an interesting paradox, while Christchurch was overflowing with practitioners, regional clinics across New Zealand were actively searching for Osteopaths. That sparked my curiosity to explore opportunities beyond the city.

Moving North

Before jumping into the job market, I needed to clarify what I actually wanted from my first role. Three key priorities emerged:

Continued Learning - I was keenly aware of my limited clinical experience, so mentorship felt essential. I wanted to work in a setting where I could continue

developing my skills under experienced practitioners.

Financial Stability - A salaried position, rather than the uncertainty of contract work, would allow me to focus on learning the profession without the added stress of financial insecurity.

A Positive Work Environment - I hoped to work in a multi-disciplinary clinic alongside practitioners from different backgrounds, allowing for collaborative learning and diverse perspectives.

With these priorities in mind, I started looking beyond Christchurch and was fortunate to secure a job offer. The next step? Moving to the North Island.

Now, moving is never easy, but trying to fit six years of life into one car? That was a whole different challenge.



Somehow, my partner, our dog Muki, and I managed to cram our belongings into every available space, playing a real-life game of Tetris with our possessions. It was chaotic, but with the car packed and our future uncertain, we hit the road, ready for the next chapter.

Lessons Beyond the Classroom

Transitioning into clinical practice was surprisingly smooth, thanks to my training at Ara. The foundation I had built during my studies gave me confidence in my skills, making the shift from student to practitioner feel natural. However, as my weeks became busier, I quickly realized there are some lessons you can only learn on the job.

One of the biggest? **The importance of resourcing yourself.** In the clinic, we see a steady stream of people, many of whom are having the worst day, week, month, or even year of their lives. As osteopaths, we enter this profession because we genuinely want to help others, often bringing a strong sense of empathy into our work. But what I'm learning is that to truly take care of others, we have to take care of ourselves first.



Another valuable lesson? **The art of managing people.** Osteopathy is a hands-on profession, and we tend to focus on technique. But if we don't address the behaviors that contribute to an injury in the first place, real progress can be slow. You can apply all the right techniques, but if a patient leaves the clinic and immediately returns to the habits that caused the issue, the cycle continues.

This is where mentorship has been invaluable. Having someone willing to share their clinical knowledge, especially when it comes to patient management, can save years of trial and error.

Learning how to guide patients toward sustainable changes not only improves their outcomes but also leads to greater job satisfaction. After all, there's nothing more rewarding than seeing real, lasting progress instead of treating the same problem over and over again.



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Staying Curious, Staying Present

At the end of the day, it's just you and your patient in the treatment room, a space where your knowledge, intuition, and hands come together to make a difference.

The same curiosity that led you down this path will be what keeps you engaged, growing, and fulfilled. Every patient is a new story, a new challenge, a new lesson. Stay open to learning, stay passionate about the process, and, most importantly, stay present, because even the smallest impact can mean everything to the person sitting in front of you.

--Kauri Walmsley

The Evolution of Osteopathy

Learning from Physiotherapy's Glow-Up

As healthcare trends come and go, one thing is clear: change is inevitable. Osteopathy, with its deep roots in manual therapy, is now at a pivotal moment. The past decade has seen physiotherapy undergo a major glow-up, embracing exercise and self-directed recovery like never before. It begs the question: should osteopathy take a leaf out of physiotherapy's book, without losing its unique flair?

Remember when physiotherapists were all about that hands-on action? Well, Physiotherapy has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade, when research started to shake things up. Around 2010, where hands-on techniques once dominated, studies started to emerge that found that exercise therapy could be more effective than manual therapy for various conditions. As a result, physiotherapy training evolved, placing greater emphasis on rehabilitation, exercise prescription, and empowering patients to take an active role in their recovery.

In 2013, leading publications such as the Journal of Physiotherapy highlighted the benefits of this shift. Curricula further adapted, and physiotherapists-in-training began focusing even more on movement-based interventions. By 2015, the research only continued to reinforce the shift toward exercise-based rehabilitation, demonstrating its effectiveness across various musculoskeletal conditions. At this stage the message was clear: active engagement in rehabilitation yields strong outcomes.

The Risks of a One-Size-Fits-All Approach

As healthcare evolves, there's always a risk of overcorrecting. In the push toward evidence-based care, some areas of physiotherapy have leaned exclusively into exercise-based rehabilitation. While research strongly supports exercise for long-term outcomes, the shift to a more hands-off approach isn't without challenges.

For many patients, manual therapy is an integral part of their recovery experience—not just for its physiological benefits, but for the reassurance and relief it provides in the short



term. A purely exercise-driven model may leave some feeling overlooked, particularly those who seek hands-on treatment as part of their care. If patients don't feel their needs are being met, engagement can drop, potentially affecting adherence and outcomes.

And let's not forget the **role of AI** in the coming years; in the UK, the National Health Service is already piloting AI physio/rehab systems that don't require a trained Physiotherapist. This highlights a potential risk for practitioners who rely solely on exercise prescription—if rehabilitation becomes entirely standardized and protocol-driven, it becomes easier to automate, reducing the demand for human clinicians.



Striking the right balance is crucial. While the data emphasizes the power of movement, integrating manual therapy where appropriate may help bridge the gap between research findings and patient expectations.

What about Osteopathy?

While physiotherapy has embraced this evolution, osteopathy has remained more firmly rooted in manual therapy. However, with increasing evidence supporting exercise-based interventions, there is an opportunity for osteopathy to incorporate more movement-focused strategies into its approach.

That said, manual therapy still holds an important place. A 2021 study in *Musculoskeletal Science and Practice* found that combining manual therapy with exercise led to better results for shoulder impingement syndrome. Similarly, a 2022 article in the *Journal of Manual & Manipulative Therapy* highlighted that hands-on treatment remains valuable for acute pain and mobility issues. Rather than viewing these approaches as competing philosophies, integrating both could enhance patient outcomes.

Meeting Modern Healthcare Standards

In today's healthcare environment, data-driven care is more important than ever. Organizations such as ACC place **strong emphasis on measurable outcomes**, making it essential for osteopaths to track patient progress effectively. Osteopathy has traditionally been less focused on standardized outcome measures, but adapting to these expectations can improve patient care and ensure alignment with broader healthcare initiatives.

For those looking to participate in initiatives like the Integrated Community Pathways for Musculoskeletal Care (ICPMSK), outcome tracking is not just beneficial—it's essential.

Evolving Osteopathic Education

So, what does the future hold for osteopathy? A balanced, integrated approach to care may be the key. This doesn't mean osteopathy should mirror physiotherapy, but rather that it can still incorporate new elements. Patients seek osteopaths because they value manual therapy—and often appreciate the immediate relief it can provide. Blending that with movement-based strategies can create a more comprehensive, adaptable model of care. This approach ensures osteopathy remains distinct yet modern, embracing both tradition and innovation to meet the needs of today's patients, and the demands from organisations like ACC.

By maintaining its identity while adapting to emerging evidence, osteopathy can continue to provide high-quality, patient-centered care. The future isn't about choosing between hands-on or hands-off treatment—it's about finding the right balance to deliver the best possible outcomes.

-Morgan Hancock

Research update



Dr Kesava Kovanur Sampath
Research Chair, ONZ

Kia Ora Koutou, As anticipated, the start of 2025 has been a busy and productive period for our research efforts. Several articles have been published recently in respected international journals. A brief summary of each is provided below with links.

Research Publications

Prevalence and profile of New Zealand osteopaths treating people experiencing headaches and migraines

This study found that a significant proportion of New Zealand osteopaths frequently treat patients with headaches (84.8%) and migraines (38.6%). Clinicians often use HVLA techniques, address TMJ dysfunction in migraine cases, treat the thoracic spine in headache cases, and regularly refer patients to other healthcare providers. The findings highlight NZ osteopaths' collaborative, inter-professional approach to managing headache and migraine disorders.

Leadership and Capacity Building in International Osteopathic Research: introducing Strengthening Osteopathy Leadership and Research (SOLAR) Program

The SOLAR program is an international initiative designed to strengthen the research capacity and leadership within the osteopathy profession. Since its inception in 2022, the program has successfully supported osteopathic researchers, resulting in significant research outputs and professional development. This initiative plays a key role in building a robust evidence base to inform osteopathic practice and integrate osteopathy further into the broader healthcare landscape.

Combined NZ-Aus Osteopathic Research Conference

We are excited to invite you to submit your research abstract for the upcoming NZ-Aus Conference

happening in Auckland (5-7 Sep, 2025). This year's themes focus on key developments in osteopathy, ranging from technological innovations and collaborative care to healthcare policy and cultural competency. The conference will provide a platform to share insights, exchange knowledge, and foster meaningful discussions.

Conference Themes:

- ◆ Tech Meets Touch - Innovations in Osteopathy
- ◆ Stronger Together - Integrating Mind, Body, and Collaborative Care
- ◆ From Student to Specialist - Bridging the Gap for New Graduates
- ◆ Beyond the Clinic - Osteopathy's Expanding Role in Community Health
- ◆ Health System Analysis - Osteopathy in Policy & Healthcare Systems
- ◆ Cultural Competency in Osteopathy - Holistic & Inclusive Approaches

Descriptions around the themes and abstract submissions can be made on the [conference website](#).

I'd like to extend my gratitude to the research organising committee—Jack Feehan (Australia), Zoe Steele (Ara) and Rebecca Mowat (AUT) for their valuable insights and efforts in shaping the research stream for the conference. We warmly encourage you to submit an abstract and to share this opportunity with any colleagues who may be interested. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Special Interest Group

I'm delighted by the enthusiastic response we've received for our Research Special Interest Group (SiG) within the osteopathic community! The group has already grown to over 25 members, and regular updates on research activities, webinars, and new opportunities will be shared via email with all members. If you haven't joined yet but are interested, feel free to get in touch with me at research@osteopaths.nz

Research Engagement

One of our key priorities is to enhance research engagement and uptake within the osteopathic profession in New Zealand. To support this, we've launched a monthly webinar series titled "OSTEOTalk: Bridging Research and Practice". We've been fortunate to host leading experts in osteopathy who share the latest research findings and their practical applications in clinical settings. These engaging sessions provide valuable insights for practitioners, educators, and students alike. Don't miss out on the opportunity to expand your knowledge and enhance patient care!

Webinar 3: Cervical Artery Dysfunction: new insights from UK clinical practice by A/Prof Jerry Drapper-Rodi (President - NCOR) scheduled on 27th March.



NCOR-ONZ partnership

A groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has just been signed between the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR) and the Osteopaths New Zealand Research Committee (ONZ-RC), marking an exciting step forward in osteopathic collaboration.

This partnership bridges the UK and New Zealand, creating a dynamic framework for collaboration in the field of osteopathic medicine. Couple of exciting projects including on PROMS are on the pipeline, watch the space.



Research Consultation Committee

I'm pleased to announce the formation of our Research Consultation Committee (RCC). This committee brings together professionals from varied backgrounds—including researchers, clinicians, educators, peer-group leads, and a layperson—to support consultation, foster research development, and encourage research uptake, ensuring a broad range of perspectives within the profession are represented. The RCC includes Angela Young, Anne-Lise Gerardin, Holly Royal, Amanda Viedma-Dodd, Deborah Price, and myself, Kesava Kovanur Sampath. The committee will meet quarterly for one hour, with the aim of providing guidance on research projects, addressing research-related matters, and helping to share research updates and outcomes with peer groups, members, and the wider community.

Overall the progress we've achieved in just four short months since launching the research SiG has been remarkable. With strong collaboration and partnerships driving us forward, 2025 is set to truly become the "Year of Research Excellence" for osteopathy in New Zealand.

-Dr Kesava Kovanur Sampath



Victorian Remedies: A Journey through 1896 Medical Advice

EXCERPTS FROM
"THE PEOPLES COMMON SENSE MEDICAL
ADVISOR IN PLAIN ENGLISH"

R.V Pierce M.D
Sixty sixth edition - 1896

These are direct extracts from an original copy of the above book, printed in 1896. The style of phrasing and the advice it provides was so unique that I thought it worth a page in the ONZ magazine each issue. A short disclaimer; [ONZ does not recommend following any of the medical information nor does it endorse any of its statements.](#) It is purely for interest and amusement. -Morgan Hancock

THE USE OF TOBACCO AND OPIUM

The recovery of the sick is often delayed, sometimes entirely prevented, by the habitual use of tobacco or opium. In acute diseases, the appetite for tobacco is usually destroyed by the force of the disease; but in chronic ailments, the appetite remains unchanged, and the patient continues his indulgence greatly, to the aggravation of the malady. The use of tobacco is a pernicious habit and its active principle **Nicotin**, which is an energetic poison, exerts its specific effect on the nervous system.

The horse, under the action of whip and spur, may exhibit great spirit and rapid movement, but you urge him beyond his strength with these agents and you inflict lasting injury. Withhold the stimulants and the drooping head and moping pace indicate the sad reaction that has taken place. This illustrates the evils of habitually exciting the nerves by the use of tobacco, opium or other drugs. Under their influence the tone of the system is greatly impaired, and it responds more feebly to the influence of curative agents.

MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

Skill in the art of healing is indicated in three ways; (1.) by ascertaining the symptoms, seat and nature of the disease, which is termed diagnosis; (2.) by foretelling the probable termination, when is termed prognosis; (3.) By the employment of efficacious and appropriate remedies, which is called treatment. Of these three requisites to a prosperous issue, nothing so distinguishes the expert from the mere pretender as his ready ability to interpret correctly, the location, extent and character of an affection from its symptoms.

Medical diagnosis is both a science and an art; a science when the causes and symptoms of a disease are understood, and an art when this knowledge can be applied to determine its location and exact nature. Science presents the general principles of practice.; art detects among the characteristic symptoms the differential signs and applies the remedy.

AROMATIC SULPHURIC ACID

Otherwise known as Elixir of Vitriol, is the most aggregable form of **sulphuric acid** for administration and may be given in doses from five to fifteen drops largely diluted in water. In taking acids they should be sucked through a straw and not allowed to come in contact with the teeth, as otherwise the latter organs will be injured by their effects; or should the acid come in contact with the teeth, the mouth should be immediately rinsed with a solution of saleratus or soda, to neutralise the acid.

HOW TO USE WATER

Very little is any water should be taken at meal times, since the salivary glands furnish an abundance of watery fluid to assist in mastication. When these glands are aided with water to "wash down" the food, their functions become feeble and impaired. The gastric juice is diluted and digestion weakened. Large draughts of cold water ought never to be indulged in, since they cause derangement of the stomach. When the body is overheated, the use of much water is injurious. It should only be taken in small quantities. Thirst may be partially allayed, without injury, by holding cold water in the mouth for a short time and then spitting it out, taking care to swallow only very little.



The Institute of Osteopathy's mentoring platform

Mentoring can be hugely satisfying, can legitimately be classed as CPD and can help you to advance your own career, whether you are the mentor or mentee. Bringing the profession together by developing an effective professional support network for osteopaths will also retain valuable expertise within the profession and help to ensure that osteopathy remains a growing, thriving profession that is fit for the 21st century.

The iO mentoring platform is designed to make it easier for osteopaths who are looking for this sort of support to find a suitable mentor, and includes tools and guidance to support you, whether you want to be a mentor, a mentee, or both.

The iO has always held the view that osteopaths can only benefit from working and sharing with other osteopaths. This goes for observations too. To facilitate this, we are calling for osteopaths who are interested in providing observation/shadowing opportunities to add their details to the [iO mentoring platform](#)!

The iO want you to get the most out of this platform so if you have any enquiries about this initiative, please contact Mentoring@iOsteopathy.org

iMPROVE
DEVELOP
TRAINING
MOTIVATE
COACHING
iNSPIRE





Need support?

ONZ advocacy, advice & support

Is everything going well at work, or do you sometimes wish you had someone outside of work to talk to? Are you dealing with a challenging work environment, issues with your principal or employees, or feeling unsure about how to handle or file a complaint? Perhaps you're feeling isolated or undervalued?

One of the key roles of ONZ is to provide support for members when things start to turn pear-shaped.

Even experienced practitioners encounter problems, and we have successfully supported many of our members through various issues.

If you have a problem, contact ONZ. We offer completely confidential support to help you address the challenges you're facing.

Online Learning Library



The ONZ online learning library now features a wealth of educational resources, accessible through the ONZ resources page. Among the recent additions are several comprehensive webinar series, including a three-part series that covers crucial business topics such as understanding your business, the realities of running one, distinguishing between contractors and sole traders, and mastering your financials. Additionally, there are specialized webinars that

delve into important subjects like bringing in overseas osteopaths, navigating immigration challenges, insurance considerations, and ACC32 Process & Appeals. This growing collection of modules and webinars is designed to support the ongoing professional development of osteopaths across a wide range of topics.

2024/5 BOARD MEMBERS



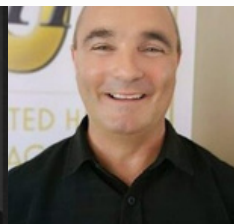
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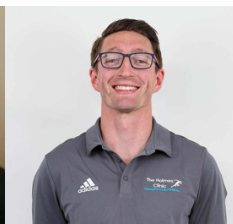
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Calling all writers

We have a huge bank of knowledge locked up in our many members brains and as it so happens we now have this magazine that will benefit from articles written by our members! Your submissions can cover a wide array of topics, from detailed explorations of specialized techniques and treatments to personal narratives of unique projects.

We're excited to invite you to share your insights and experiences with the membership. Perhaps you're passionate about or have in-depth knowledge of a particular therapeutic approach that can benefit your peers. Maybe you've been involved in community health initiatives or

presentations at conferences you'd like to share? It might be an article discussing the latest advancements in technology, case studies demonstrating effective treatment plans, or educational pieces that delve into anatomy, biomechanics, and patient care strategies. Whether it's a comprehensive review of current best practices, an inspiring story of patient recovery, an analytical piece on emerging trends in the field or a personal story from your career, your contributions will help make our magazine a valuable resource for everyone.

Contact communications@osteopaths.nz if you've got an article you'd like to write.

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Jims SIG piece

As our population ages, the demand for age-related residential care is increasing significantly. By 2030, it's projected that New Zealand will need an additional 12,000 to 20,000 aged residential care beds. This presents a unique opportunity for osteopaths to contribute their expertise to this growing sector.



In the 2024 Age-Related Residential Care Services Agreement, allied health professionals are explicitly mentioned as part of the Age-Related Care (ARC) workforce. As osteopaths, we fall under this category, which opens doors for our involvement in aged care facilities. The ARC sector is facing significant workforce shortages. This presents an opportunity for osteopaths to fill crucial gaps in care provision, especially in areas where our skills can complement existing services.

Integrating osteopathic services into aged care enhances residents' quality of life and meets the demand for specialized care. Osteopaths adopt a holistic approach, collaborating with health professionals to create comprehensive care plans that address physical, emotional, and social needs.

Our role in preventive care is vital, as we can identify health issues early, reducing chronic conditions and improving longevity. As we adapt to the challenges of aged care, osteopaths can develop programs focused on mobility, cognitive function, and overall well-being, benefiting both residents and the facilities.



Scope for Osteopathic Services

Several areas highlighted in the document align well with osteopathic expertise:

- **Rehabilitation Services:** The document emphasises the need for rehabilitation services in ARC facilities. Our skills in improving mobility, function, and pain management are directly applicable here.
- **Person-Centred Care:** There's a strong focus on person-centred care, which aligns perfectly with our holistic approach to treatment.
- **Preventive Care:** The document stresses the importance of preventive care to maintain residents' independence. Osteopaths can contribute significantly to fall prevention and overall wellness programmes.



How do we engage in this area?

Steps for Osteopaths Interested in ARC

- **Networking:** Reach out to local ARC facilities to discuss how osteopathic services could benefit their residents.
- **Collaboration:** Look for opportunities to collaborate with other healthcare professionals in ARC settings, showcasing the value of interdisciplinary care.

We believe that by engaging in this area, we can not only expand our professional scope but also make a significant positive impact on the quality of life for older New Zealanders. We encourage you to view this as an exciting opportunity to broaden your practice and contribute to addressing the growing needs of our ageing population. - Anj Young



Back in the Saddle

Life as an Equine Osteopath

Graduating from the BSO in 2001, Jo Stutton pursued an additional year of postgraduate study at the ESO under Stuart McGregor, earning equine qualifications. With further training in advanced courses, dissections, biomechanical studies, and hoof function, they continue to explore the vast depth of their field.

I had wanted to be a vet since I was a kid, but realised that wasn't actually the path for me nor the right approach for me. Working as an Equine Osteopath is an utter privilege and I'm honoured to be able to work with such incredible animals.

Although horses are a much larger patient to treat, I find they respond a lot faster and you can make deeper changes than with people. Horses are incredibly sensitive and body aware and really allow you to utilise "Osteopathy". I often wish my human clients had the same innate understanding of their bodies! It is a physical job, and can be heavy, but good self care is such an important part of how we need to work anyway in our profession.

An equine treatment

So, how does a horse treatment work?! Same as with a human I guess. I'll talk with the owner about the current issues, past injuries, their level of ridden work/competition, goals etc. all the time I'll be watching how the horse is reacting. Are they tense and pacing, relaxed and happy, eating, how are they standing?

Are they shod/barefoot? In good condition? You can get so much information from observing as well as questioning. I'll then ask the owner to walk and trot the horse up. Watching it move and getting an overall picture is, I think, essential. To focus straight into the area of concern will cause you to miss so much other information. If needed, I'll see the horse under saddle, or on the lunge.



A thorough palpatory exam follows, assessing the horse from head to tail. I check for areas of reactivity, soft tissue tension, scars, lumps, and range of motion in the spine and peripheral joints. This includes moving the horse to weight-bear through each individual limb while watching for tension or reactions.

Treatment methods for animals are quite similar to those used for humans, with adjustments made for their unique skeletal structure and body size! I employ various techniques such as mobilization, articulation, and fascial release work—something I've noticed horses respond to very positively. Additionally, I incorporate cranial



and visceral techniques, along with soft tissue and traction methods. These are all the same approaches we would apply to people.

You can achieve significant improvements in posture and comfort in just one session, which is incredibly fulfilling.

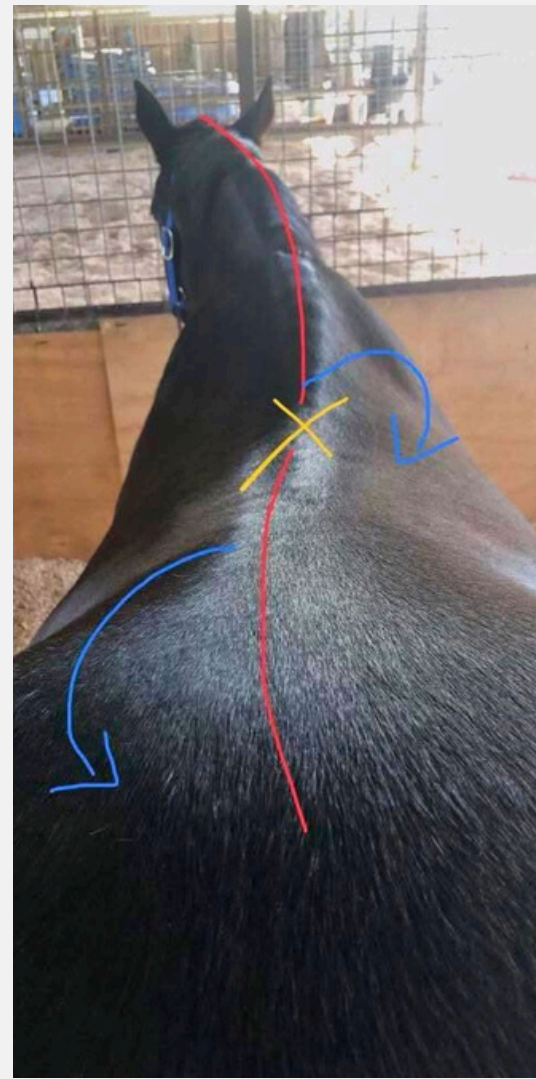


As an equine osteopath, I believe it's essential to have riding experience to fully grasp what a horse should feel like and how it should move, as well as to be familiar with the terminology. Evaluating the fit of tack, including saddles and bridles, along with understanding hooves and farriery, is also a crucial component of a holistic approach.

Typical reasons for my involvement include noticeable back pain, especially during grooming or tacking up. Other signs may include behavioral changes like bucking, kicking out, becoming head shy, showing reluctance to canter in one direction, knocking down or refusing jumps, and a general decline in performance or lameness.

I have developed a strong network of professionals, including therapists, dentists, veterinarians, farriers, saddlers, and more, because achieving the best outcomes for these wonderful animals truly requires a collaborative team effort.

-Jo Stutton



Caring for Giants

A Journey into Elephant Osteopathy



Eight years ago, Emily King attended a workshop on elephant osteopathy, led by Tony Nevin of Zoo Ost Ltd. This experience inspired her to return multiple times, eventually becoming a co-director of Zoo Ost International, where she now contributes to the lecturing and teaching of these workshops.

The Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF), established in 2005, is based in the Golden Triangle of northern Thailand's Chiang Rai province. Its mission is to support elephants in need, particularly those rescued from begging or exploitative tourism.



The foundation cares not only for the elephants but also for the mahouts (elephant handlers), offering them sustainable livelihoods. This includes paying them a monthly salary, providing accommodation, covering the elephants' feed and veterinary care, and supporting the education of their children to ensure a future free from reliance on elephant tourism.

Our elephant osteopathy workshops are conducted in collaboration with the GTAEF, the Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort, and with patronage from Longleat Safari Park in England.



The five-day workshops, held at the Anantara Golden Triangle Resort, one of the world's leading eco-retreats, offer a comprehensive learning experience. Delegates stay onsite, surrounded by lush jungle with panoramic views of three countries. The resort also provides opportunities to explore the unique culture and natural beauty of northern Thailand before or after the workshop.

The workshop combines lectures on elephant anatomy and physiology with hands-on sessions, where delegates learn to read elephant body language and apply osteopathic techniques to these majestic animals. Participants gain practical experience treating elephants in the grasslands,

observing their movements, and addressing musculoskeletal issues, which may result from past injuries or psychological stress.

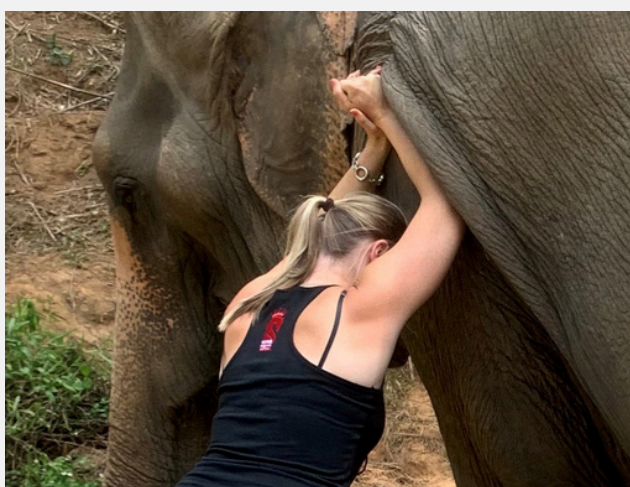
Elephants under the care of the GTAEF range in age from 5 to 63 years, each with a unique history. Their physical conditions vary, from injuries sustained in logging or tourism to tension-related issues stemming from emotional stress. As in human practice, we observe, palpate, treat, and reassess their conditions. Elephants, unable to communicate pain in the same way as humans, require keen observation of their posture, gait, and interactions with one another to detect dysfunctional patterns.



Palpation is a vital part of our approach, allowing us to perform a quick scan of their bodies, identifying areas of tension, swelling, or discomfort. While elephants are accustomed to human presence, they may be sensitive to touch in certain areas, so we approach them gently, starting in comfortable zones and gradually addressing more sensitive regions.



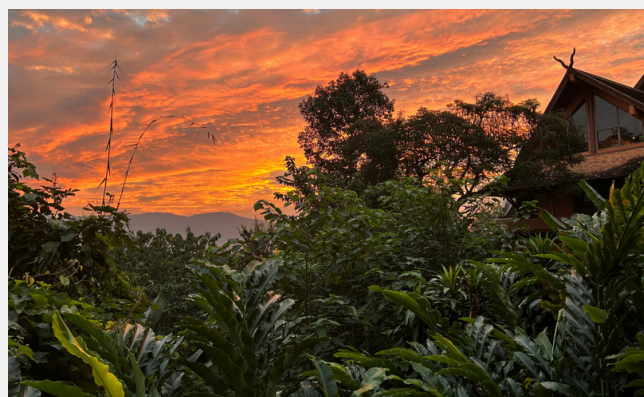
We employ a variety of osteopathic techniques, including myofascial release, counterstrain, cranial techniques, joint articulation, and soft tissue inhibition, tailoring our methods to the specific needs of each elephant. Our goal is to alleviate compensatory patterns while respecting the elephants' comfort and boundaries.



Due to the size and complexity of elephants, it is common for multiple practitioners to treat the animal simultaneously. This collaborative approach allows us to "link in" with each other, tracking the tissue changes and compensatory patterns we are addressing. Elephants present both physical and mental challenges, as they are highly attuned to the energy and focus of those working with them. If a practitioner becomes overly tentative or distracted, the elephant may respond by becoming fidgety, irritable, or disengaged. Maintaining a clear, stable mind and quiet energy is essential to creating a productive and harmonious treatment environment.



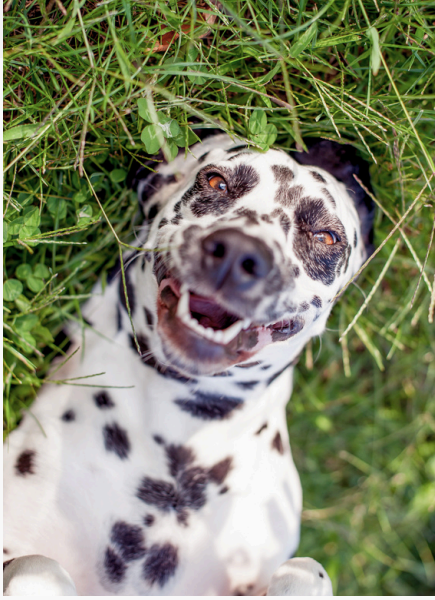
This workshop is open to osteopaths, physiotherapists, veterinarians, and chiropractors, with no prior animal treatment experience required. The next workshop will take place from **March 15-19, 2025**, with additional workshops held annually in March and October.



Regardless of whether your practice focuses on humans, horses, dogs, or other animals, this workshop offers valuable insights and techniques to enhance your professional skills.



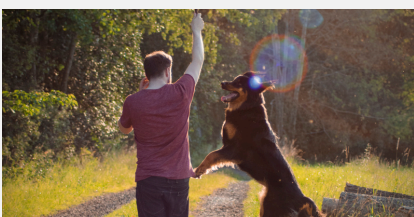
For those interested in deepening their understanding of elephant care while advancing their osteopathic expertise, we encourage you to reach out and secure your place in this extraordinary opportunity. -Emily King



While most osteopaths are accustomed to treating human patients, an increasing number of pet owners are turning to osteopathy to address various health issues in their dogs. Canine osteopathy follows the same core principles as its human counterpart, the goal being to enhance the body's natural ability to heal and maintain optimal function.

As osteopaths, you're already familiar with how we can relieve musculoskeletal dysfunction and improve overall health. When applied to dogs, osteopathy can offer similar benefits: pain relief, enhanced mobility, muscle and joint rehabilitation, improved posture etc. However, the methods of assessment and treatment are adjusted to fit the specific needs of dogs, including their anatomy, responses to treatment, and the challenges of treating non-verbal patients.

Canine osteopathy offers a number of benefits for dogs, especially when it comes to treating musculoskeletal issues. Some of the key advantages include: pain relief, improved posture and gait, reduced lameness, improved mobility, reducing inflammation, muscle and joint rehabilitation, stress reduction for anxious dogs, preventative care and more.



Research

Canine Osteopathy 101

Lana Fort, an osteopath and the owner of The Body Clinic in Kumeu, Auckland, shares her insights into treating canine patients. At her clinic, she addresses issues like joint stiffness and arthritis, using osteopathic techniques to improve mobility and quality of life.

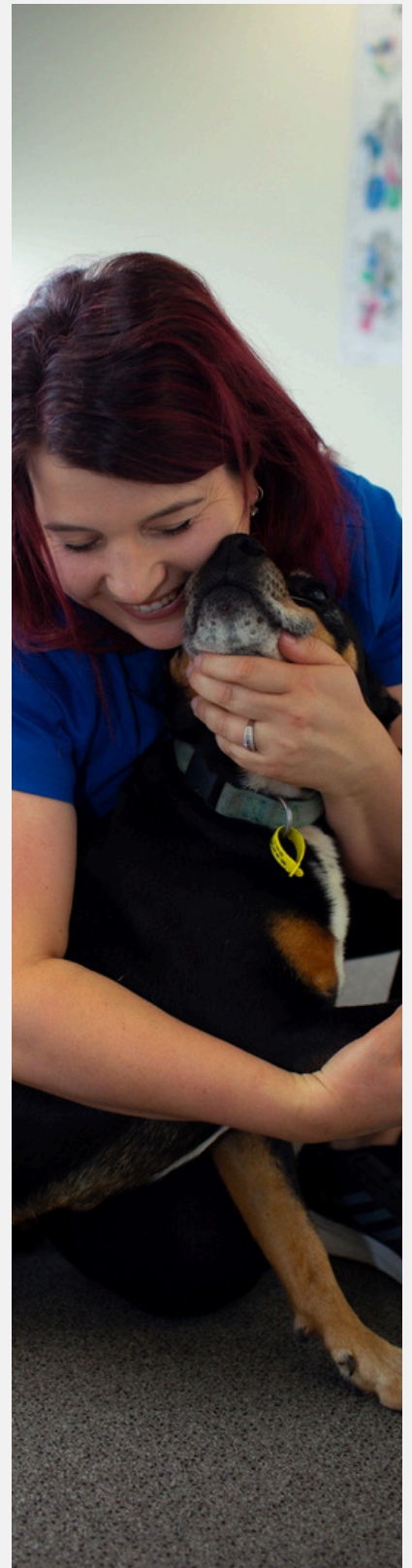
Some of the most common issues treated include:

- **Arthritis:** Chronic inflammation of the joints is common in older dogs and can cause stiffness, pain, and lameness.
- **Hip Dysplasia:** This hereditary condition causes abnormal development of the hip joint, leading to pain and arthritis over time.
- **Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD):** A condition that affects the spine and can lead to pain, weakness, or paralysis.
- **Muscle Strains, sprains and injuries:** Active dogs are prone to muscle and ligament injuries. Most commonly are cruciate ligament and patella injuries.
- **Post-Surgical Rehabilitation:**
- **Gait Abnormalities/lameness:** Whether caused by injury, congenital conditions, or simply wear and tear, osteopathy can help improve abnormal gait patterns and promote better movement.

The same but different..

While canine osteopathy shares many similarities with human osteopathy, there are notable differences due to the unique anatomical and physiological characteristics of dogs.

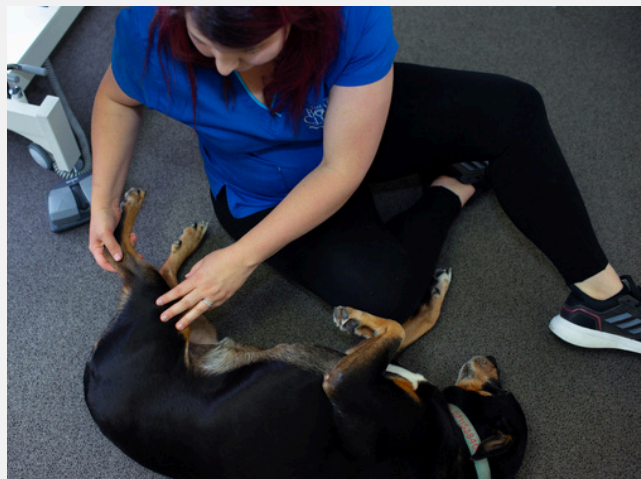
Anatomical Differences: Dogs have a different musculoskeletal structure compared to humans. Their four-legged posture, different joint configurations, and unique body mechanics require osteopaths to modify their techniques.



Treatment Approach and patient cooperation: In human osteopathy, practitioners often use verbal communication to understand a patient's symptoms and adjust their treatment plan accordingly. With dogs, osteopaths rely more on their hands and observation. The practitioner must carefully observe the dog's movements, posture, and responses to various techniques to assess where treatment is needed. Dogs are also less likely to lie still or follow instructions, so the techniques used may be gentler and adapted to the dog's comfort level. A key difference is that human patients can express where they feel pain or discomfort, whereas dogs cannot.

Duration and Frequency of Treatment: After 1-2 sessions many dogs show significant improvement in their mobility and comfort levels. And, just like toddlers, a Dogs attention span is also limited therefore treatment is often for shorter periods 15-30mins max.

Osteopathy can serve as a valuable alternative for our four-legged patients, helping to avoid costly surgical and pharmaceutical treatments, and for pet owners interested in providing their dogs with holistic care, osteopathy is an effective and compassionate option.



As with any treatment, it's essential to work with a qualified Osteopath who can provide tailored care based on the dog's individual needs. To become a qualified Animal Osteopath, we attain a postgraduate diploma in Animal Osteopathy as well as participating in regular animal CPD courses.

Canine osteopathy is a safe, non-invasive therapy that can benefit dogs suffering from a range of issues. Much like our patients, many pet owners are seeking alternative healthcare options beyond what traditional veterinary care provides. -Lana Fort



Conference 2025

September 5th-7th
Auckland

Save the Date!

Get ready for our next big conference! Mark your calendars for Friday, September 5th to Sunday, September 7th, 2025, as Osteopaths NZ brings you three days of learning, inspiration, and connection.

We're pleased to announce this year's symposium will be held at the JetPark Conference Centre & Hotel, conveniently located near Auckland Airport. With easy access for attendees traveling from out of town and free onsite parking for locals, this venue offers the perfect backdrop for an unforgettable event.

Whether you're looking to deepen your professional knowledge, connect with peers, or engage in hands-on workshops, this conference promises something for everyone. Expect an exciting blend of lectures, practical sessions, and opportunities to network with osteopathy professionals from across the country.

Stay tuned for more details in the new year, including our speaker lineup, session highlights, and registration information. For now, save the date and start planning your visit—we can't wait to see you there!



Feel every hit

Live every moment

Osteopath Fausta Fernandez returns to New Zealand after working at the 2024 World Masters Indoor Cricket Series in Sri Lanka, sharing her insights into the realities of being a courtside osteopath. As she puts it, 'It's far from a glamorous lifestyle.'

I never imagined I'd be working with cricket teams—let alone indoor cricket. In fact, I've always said, "I hate cricket!" But here I am, five years on after debuting with Indoor Cricket New Zealand (ICNZ) as their physio/trainer at the World Cup Masters in South Africa in 2019.

For those who are unfamiliar with the sport, here's a quick breakdown: indoor cricket is an extreme version of traditional cricket. It is played on a tight netted court that's roughly 30 meters long, 12 meters wide, and 7.5 meters high. The game lasts 90 minutes with 10 players on the court at a time. It's fast-paced, high-energy, and increasingly popular in countries like Australia, New Zealand, England, South Africa, India, Sri Lanka, the UAE, and more recently, Singapore and the USA. The sport is governed by the World Indoor Cricket Federation (WICF), which is responsible for the organisation and promotion of indoor cricket globally and ensures the best interests of players are maintained.

Thanks to the connections I've built and maintained through the years, in recent times I have expanded to work with other teams, including England and South Africa.



Who you know..

The saying, it's all about who you know—couldn't be truer. While completing my third-year bachelor's degree, I worked part-time as a sports masseuse for Australian NRL teams. One of the organisers connected me with the President of the WICF, and that's how I became the first osteopath to join indoor cricket.



In the beginning, my role was simple: I strapped players, gave them massages, and focused on keeping them fit for the tournament. On tournament days, my primary responsibility was to manage acute injuries and help players stay in the game.

The challenge? I often went in blind, not knowing anything about players' pre-existing injuries or medical conditions, much like meeting a new patient in a clinical setting—you're often dealing with the unknowns. Many players may not have adequately prepared for the tournament, which means there are always surprises as the games heat up toward the finals.



At the start, my skills were fairly basic. I had some knowledge of massage, injury taping, and basic diagnostics—skills I learned during my degree. But I quickly realised I needed to know more. I had to be efficient in assessing injuries and making snap decisions about whether players could continue or needed to be substituted. To fill in the gaps, I started watching videos on taping techniques, observing other physios, and eventually signed up to complete a Medical Diploma to deepen my understanding of field sports and acute injury management. Some medical support staff need to complete a separate course to be nominated as a Head Injury Assessor, in order to sign off players that sustain serious head injuries and/or concussions.



“In indoor cricket, medical staff are given just two minutes to assess, diagnose, treat, and decide if a player can continue or needs to be substituted”.

As my experience grew, so did my confidence. Osteopathy gave me a real edge because I could apply my anatomy, physiology and biomechanical knowledge, manual therapy techniques, and triaging skills. Over time, I started handling more serious injuries, including, nerve entrapments, torn muscles, concussions and head trauma. Head injuries are quite common, whether from a ball to the face, a bat to the head, or player collisions. On average, I'd see about four to five head injuries per tournament. The most severe injury I've encountered so far was a broken collarbone and dislocated shoulder.

Speed & accuracy

I'll still recall my first experience with a dislocated patella. The wicketkeeper collapsed to the ground in agony, and I had just **two minutes** to assess the injury, relocate the patella, apply coolant, tape up his knee, and get him back in the game. Thankfully, he made it through the last quarter, but then was substituted and couldn't play the rest of the game.

In indoor cricket, medical staff are given just two minutes to assess, diagnose, treat, and decide if a player can continue or needs to be substituted.

The best part of working these tournaments is the chance to collaborate with other medical professionals who bring years of experience and knowledge from different sports. It offers a refreshing break from my everyday clinical practice and gives me the opportunity to travel and work in intense, high-stakes environments.

I've also had the chance to liaise with different country delegates and become more involved in the indoor sports world in different ways. Earlier this year, I had my first real opportunity to organise medical support for a tournament. Action Indoor Sports South Africa were sending a squad to participate in the U17s Tri Series World Cup in Auckland against New Zealand and Australia. I had three teams, coaches, umpires, and team managers under my care. Alongside that, I had to organise staff, equipment, and supplies for the event, all while juggling my day-to-day clinical work.



A day on the courts

For anyone wondering what the life of a courtside osteopath is like, it's far from glamorous. It's hard work, long hours, and it often involves sleep deprivation, dealing with sweat, grime, sickness, and emotional highs and lows. One minute you're treating a chest infection that presents like a musculoskeletal issue, the next it's dehydration or overhydration causing digestive problems. What was unexpected for me was a lot of personal growth. You learn about the game, about different cultures, and about your own ability and your ability to cope with the demands of the job. It's not for the faint-hearted. The job requires a certain level of character, skill, and professional qualification. But it's also incredibly rewarding. There's a deep satisfaction in knowing you've helped players push through pain, recover from injuries and continue doing what they love. By the end of each tour, when everyone's made it through, you take pride in knowing you've played a part in helping them achieve what they set out to.

-Favsta Fernandez

Special Interest Group - Research

I'm thrilled to share that we're in the process of forming a Special Interest Group (SiG) for research within our osteopathic community! This group will serve as a platform for collaboration, innovation, and knowledge exchange between clinicians, academics, and researchers who are passionate about advancing osteopathic research. I'm currently in the process of identifying the core group for this exciting initiative. If you're a clinician, academic, or researcher with an interest in joining this SiG, I'd love to hear from you!

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at Kesava.KovanurSampath@wintec.ac.nz. More details about the SiG's structure, goals, and how it will support research initiatives will be shared soon—stay tuned for more updates!

Conference 2025

The combined NZ/Australia osteopathic conference is scheduled to take place in Auckland from September 5-7th, 2025. This three-day event presents an exciting opportunity for the profession, featuring both clinical and research-based presentations and workshops. A call for research presentations will be announced soon, along with a link to submit a structured abstract. Be sure to keep an eye on the ONZ website for further updates!

I'm both ambitious and confident in declaring 2025 as the "Year of Research Excellence" for osteopathy in New Zealand. Let's make this the year we elevate our profession through innovation, collaboration, and groundbreaking research! Together, we can cultivate a culture of research and innovation that will elevate our profession and its impact on patient care. Let's make 2025 a transformative year for osteopathy in Aotearoa!

-Dr Kesava Kovanur Sampath



A Guide to Case Studies and Case Series

Dr Michael Fleischmann

In an era where evidence-based practice is paramount, clinicians often find themselves navigating the challenging intersection of research and real-world application. Our recent webinar, "[A Clinician's Guide to Performing a Case Study and a Case Series Study](#)," presented by Dr. Michael Fleischmann, explored the practicalities of conducting case series and applying this research method in clinical settings.

Dr. Fleischmann highlighted the role of case series as a practical research approach to bridge the gap between clinical practice and traditional randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Case series allow practitioners to observe real-world therapeutic interactions, document patient outcomes, and generate hypotheses for future research.

Multicenter collaborations and frameworks like Peacock offer structured methodologies, enabling osteopaths to measure success and contribute to the profession's growth while respecting individual practice contexts. The session also provided tools to document real-world clinical outcomes effectively and this webinar equips you to explore therapeutic interactions, measure patient progress, and contribute valuable insights to your field.

The webinar was well attended and well-received globally, with participants from New Zealand, Australia, France, Norway, the UK, and beyond. The video recording is available on the [ONZ website resources](#) and we encourage you to explore the tools, insights, and inspiration shared during this impactful webinar to enhance your practice and contribute meaningfully to advancing the field of osteopathy.



Animal Osteopathy



When Dr. A.T Still first laid the foundations of osteopathy, he may never imagined that his principles would one day extend beyond humans to our animal companions. Yet, it feels like a natural evolution. After all, the same guiding principles—restoring balance, promoting natural healing, and recognizing the body’s interconnectedness—apply just as seamlessly to a galloping horse, a loyal dog, or even a mighty elephant as they do to us.

Animals, much like humans, can suffer from aches, pains, and mobility issues. Whether it’s an aging canine struggling to chase a ball, a horse recovering from a demanding competition season, or an elephant carrying the physical toll of years of labor, osteopathy offers gentle, non-invasive solutions to ease their discomfort. Just as with people, these treatments aim to identify the root causes of dysfunction and promote holistic well-being.

Of course, animals bring their own quirks and challenges to the treatment table—or sometimes, the stable or savanna!

Each species, and indeed each individual, has unique anatomical and physiological demands. But that’s what makes animal osteopathy so rewarding: it’s a blend of science, art, and a touch of intuition, honed through understanding each patient’s needs.

In this issue, we’ll explore how osteopathy is helping animals thrive, from dogs and horses to elephants. Whether they’re performing, working, or simply enjoying life, our animal companions deserve the same care and attention we afford ourselves. After all, as Dr. Still might agree, balance and health are universal—no matter how many legs you have.

- Morgan Hancock

Upcoming CPD

CPD run by ONZ members

Advance Foundations in Acupuncture

This intensive one-day course explores the integration of acupuncture with Western medical principles, combined with contemporary Chinese theory and advanced needle techniques.

Participants will engage in practical sessions to enhance their understanding of anatomical regions accessible by needle tips. You will learn how changes in needle angle and anatomical depth can refine your techniques and achieve specific treatment goals. The course covers stimulating ligaments, fascia, and nerves, moving beyond simple muscle insertion. Additionally, you will be introduced to a range of specialty needles used commonly overseas to enhance treatment or for specific musculoskeletal problems that benefit from a slightly different needle approach.

***Due to some requests, the course is offering a dedicated beginner's track on the same day with a second trainer during the practical components. This means that whether you're refining your advanced skills or just starting out, there's a tailored experience waiting for you.*



Date: November 9th (Sat)

Time: 9am-4.30pm

Venue: TBC, North shore, Auckland

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Osteopathic Approach to Cranial and Face

Cranial on Friday and Face on Saturday.

Do one or both days!

One day \$250, both days \$550

Investigate current understanding of cranial work with a heavy emphasis on palpation of key cranial structures and beginning the process of treating relevant areas.

Learn from Jamie who is experienced both in undergraduate teaching and clinical practice of applying cranial techniques with real case studies in a positive learning environment

Date: October 18 & 19th (Sat/Sun)

Time: 9am-5pm

Venue: 97 Don Buck Rd, Massey, Auckland

[REGISTER HERE](#)

INVESTIGATING THE SAFETY AND FEASIBILITY OF OSTEOPATHIC MANIPULATIVE MEDICINE IN HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT YOUNG ADULTS WITH CANCER

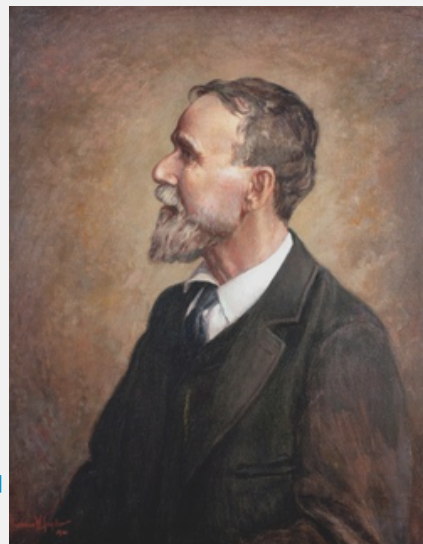
Jennifer A. Belsky, MS, DO; and Amber M. Brown, MS, DO
Journal of Osteopathic Medicine
J Osteopath Med; 124(9): 399-406, September 2024

CONTEXT: Children and adolescents young adults (AYAs) undergoing treatment for oncologic diagnoses are frequently hospitalized and experience unwanted therapy-induced side effects that diminish quality of life. Osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) is a medical intervention that utilizes manual techniques to diagnose and treat body structures. Few studies have investigated the implementation of OMT in the pediatric oncology outpatient setting. To date, no studies have investigated the safety and feasibility of OMT in the pediatric oncology inpatient setting.

OBJECTIVES: The objective of this study is to investigate the safety and feasibility of OMT in the pediatric oncology inpatient setting.

METHODS: This is a prospective, single-institution pilot study evaluating children and AYAs aged ≥ 2 years to ≤ 30 years with a diagnosis of cancer hospitalized at Riley Hospital for Children (RH) from September 2022 to July 2023. Approval was obtained from the Indiana University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Patients were evaluated daily with a history and physical examination as part of routine inpatient management. Patients who reported chemotherapy side effects commonly encountered and managed in the inpatient setting, such as pain, headache, neuropathy, constipation, or nausea, were offered OMT. Patients provided written informed consent/assent prior to receiving OMT. OMT was provided by trained osteopathic medical students under the supervision of a board-certified osteopathic physician and included techniques commonly taught in first- and second-year osteopathic medical school curricula. Safety was assessed by a validated pain (FACES) scale immediately pre/post-OMT and by adverse event grading per Common Terminology Criteria for Adverse Events (CTCAE) 24h post-OMT. All data were summarized utilizing descriptive statistics.

Research Update



RESULTS: A total of 11 patients were screened for eligibility. All patients met the eligibility criteria and were enrolled in the study. The majority of patients were male ($n=7$, 63.6%) with a median age of 18.2 years at time of enrollment (range, 10.2–29.8 years). Patients had a variety of hematologic malignancies including B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) ($n=5$, 45.5%), T-cell ALL ($n=1$, 9.1%), acute myeloid leukemia (AML) ($n=2$, 18.2%), non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma ($n=2$, 18.2%), and Hodgkin’s lymphoma ($n=1$, 9.1%). All patients were actively undergoing cancer-directed therapy at the time of enrollment. There were 40 unique reasons for OMT reported and treated across 37 encounters, including musculoskeletal pain ($n=23$, 57.5%), edema ($n=7$, 17.5%), headache ($n=5$, 12.5%), peripheral neuropathy ($n=2$, 5.0%), constipation ($n=2$, 5.0%), and epigastric pain not otherwise specified ($n=1$, 2.5%). Validated FACES pain scores were reported in 27 encounters. Of the 10 encounters for which FACES pain scores were not reported, 8 encounters addressed lower extremity edema, 1 encounter addressed peripheral neuropathy, and 1 encounter addressed constipation. The total time of OMT was documented for 33 of the 37 encounters and averaged 9.8 min (range, 3–20 min).

CONCLUSIONS: Hospitalized children and AYAs with cancer received OMT safely with decreased pain in their reported somatic dysfunction(s). These findings support further investigation into the safety, feasibility, and efficacy of implementing OMT in the pediatric oncology inpatient setting and to a broader inpatient pediatric oncology population.

A REVIEW ON OSTEOPATHIC MANIPULATION IN PATIENTS WITH HEADACHE

CSharath H, Nadipena P, Qureshi M, et al. (August 05, 2024) *Cureus* 16(8): e66242. doi:10.7759/cureus.66242

ABSTRACT: Headaches are a common neurological disorder, significantly impacting patients' quality of life. Traditional treatments include pharmacological and nonpharmacological approaches. Osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) is a holistic, hands-on technique used by osteopathic physicians to alleviate pain and improve function by addressing musculoskeletal dysfunctions.

This review aims to evaluate the effectiveness of osteopathic manipulation in managing headaches, focusing on the different types of headaches, the specific techniques used, and the overall outcomes reported in clinical studies. A comprehensive literature search was conducted across multiple databases, including PubMed, Google Scholar, and MEDLINE, to identify relevant studies published in the past two decades. Inclusion criteria were studies involving adult patients diagnosed with headaches and treated with OMT. Both randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and observational studies were included.

The review identified 15 studies meeting the inclusion criteria. Evidence suggests that OMT can be beneficial in reducing the frequency, intensity, and duration of headaches, particularly tension-type headaches (TTHs) and migraines. Techniques such as myofascial release, cranial osteopathy, and muscle energy techniques were commonly employed. Many studies reported significant improvements in patients' quality of life and functional status post-treatment. However, the heterogeneity in study designs, sample sizes, and outcome measures warrants cautious interpretation of the results.

Osteopathic manipulation shows promise as a complementary approach for managing headaches, with positive effects on pain relief and functional improvement. Further large-scale, high-quality RCTs are needed to confirm these findings and to establish standardized treatment protocols. Integrating OMT into multidisciplinary headache management strategies could potentially enhance patient outcomes and reduce reliance on pharmacological interventions.

A NATURAL APPROACH TO BELL'S PALSYP: AN OSTEOPATHIC TREATMENT OPTION

Schneider N, Shih S, Rundquist L, et al. (August 20, 2024) *Cureus* 16(8): e67334. doi:10.7759/cureus.67334

ABSTRACT: Bell's palsy (BP) is a rapid-onset neurological disorder causing unilateral facial paralysis, affecting approximately 40,000 people annually in the United States. Suggested treatments for BP include corticosteroids, facial therapy, and osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) in order to improve symptoms; however, some people with BP have spontaneous resolution.

A 52-year-old female with left-sided facial paralysis and drooping for the past four months due to BP presented to the osteopathic treatment center. For the first three weeks after developing BP, the patient had soreness when attempting to move her facial features, but on later treatments, she only experienced weakness on the left side of her face. The patient's facial sensation was intact bilaterally, but she was unable to move her left eyebrow, eyelid, cheek, and lip. OMT focused on the intraoral musculature, the cervical spine, and cranial treatment utilizing osteopathic techniques such as osteopathic cranial manipulative medicine (OCMM), direct myofascial release, soft tissue, balanced ligamentous tension, and muscle energy.

Utilizing the Facial Disability Index (FDI) questionnaire and the Sunnybrook facial grading system (SFGS), an improvement in facial paralysis was seen due to both OMT and physical therapy (PT) treatments. It is difficult to discern which treatments helped the patient the most (OMT, PT, or at-home exercises); however, the patient's improvement was notable.

This case study demonstrates that OMT, PT, and at-home exercises may positively contribute toward the improvement of BP symptoms by addressing cranial and muscular somatic dysfunctions of the head and neck. The treatment, which included techniques such as muscle energy and intraoral myofascial release, resulted in significant improvements in facial function and grading scores. One limitation of the study is that, however unlikely, chronic BP may resolve spontaneously, which may have contributed to the patient's progress. While OMT, PT, and at-home exercises contributed to the patient's recovery, further research is needed to substantiate the effectiveness of OMT, PT, and at-home exercises in treating BP.