

MEDIA RELEASE



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Australian Osteopathic Association calls for more funded university places after 100 years of practice.

In Australia there are currently only two cities with accredited courses in Osteopathy. This leaves the majority of Australian students without Osteopathy as a university choice.

Of further concern, the Sydney based, University of Western Sydney course is closing at a time when continuing university courses at RMIT and Victoria University have to turn away high TER scoring students and while graduate go on to 100% employment as allied health professionals.

The Australian Osteopathic Association (AOA) is holding its annual Osteopathy Awareness Week during April 6 - 12, 200, celebrating 100 years of osteopathic practice in Australia and calling on the federal government to fund more places for Osteopathy in Australian Universities.

Osteopaths complete 5 years of university study; are government registered, allied health professionals; collectively treat over 25 000 people a week and osteopathy has been practiced in Australia for over 100 years.

Osteopathy is a form of drug-free, manual medicine that focuses on total body health by treating and strengthening the musculoskeletal framework. It positively affects the body's nervous, circulatory and lymphatic systems.

"With a shortage of health professionals around Australia, particularly in rural and regional areas it is a shame that only 2 states in Australia have a university Osteopathy course" explains Mr. Scott Baxter, Federal President of the AOA.

"With 100% employment of graduates, a high TER and an aging Australian populations it is shocking that the government is not increasing funded places within universities to train more osteopaths" continued Mr Baxter.

Osteopaths deal regularly with patients who have been injured in the workplace, at home or while playing sport. Such patients may present with complaints of lower back pain, headaches, muscle strain or joint stiffness.

Osteopathy can be utilised as a primary form of health care, in addition to the care provided by a General Practitioner and other health professionals. Osteopathy is acknowledged by health funds, Medicare Plus and attracts a rebate with a GP referral for chronic pain.

"At a time when many health services are stretched, waiting lists are increasing and the federal government has highlighted a greater servicing of need through allied health professionals, a commitment must be made to training more Osteopaths across Australia" stated Antony Nicholas, Executive Director of the AOA

There are over 1200 Osteopaths practicing in Australia.

You can find the one nearest to you by visiting www.osteopathic.com.au or calling the AOA on 1-800-4-OSTEO (1 800 467 836).

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