

**April 2010**

**OSTEOPATHY AWARENESS WEEK: May 2-8, 2010**

The Australian Osteopathic Association (AOA) will hold its annual Osteopathy Awareness Week during 2-8 May, 2010. Osteopathy Awareness Week focusing on profiling osteopaths and their place within the health system, particularly primary health care contact.

The AOA is calling on Federal and State Governments to explain why osteopaths and the 35 000 people who see them every week are being ignored in the healthcare reform debate.

The Federal Government is attempting the most significant reform of the health systems in many years; however, it appears to be ignoring many skilled health practitioners and focusing purely on hospitals or the GP.

On average, over 1000 hospital 'separations' occur per week due to chronic back pain; yet Osteopaths can (and do) provide a vast array of health services efficiently in the community and can do more. Most of the Rudd Government health reforms are ignoring this fact.

*"As allied health care professionals, osteopaths are well placed to treat people in the community; reduce burdens on waiting times to access public health and most importantly help people to stay active or reduce pain that is affecting their quality of life"* explained Antony Nicholas, AOA Executive Director

Osteopaths are university trained, government registered, allied health professionals, who focus on musculoskeletal conditions. Back pain and other musculoskeletal conditions are estimated to cost the Australian economy over \$8 Billion per year.

Research has shown many musculoskeletal conditions are not efficiently managed in hospitals; yet the government continues to fund inefficient systems.

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. People do not require a referral.

Osteopathy is acknowledged by health funds, Department of Veterans Affairs, Workcover schemes and Medicare Plus which attracts a rebate with a GP referral for chronic pain.

There are over 1600 Osteopaths practicing in Australia. You can find the one nearest to you by visiting [www.osteopathic.com.au](http://www.osteopathic.com.au) or calling the AOA on 1800 467 836.

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