

Osteopathy Australia Submission on SIRA's Model of care for the management of low back pain-summary

Osteopathy and Osteopathy Australia

Osteopathy Australia is the peak body representing the interests of osteopaths, osteopathy as a profession, and consumer's rights to access osteopathic services. Our core work is liaising with state and federal government, and all other statutory agencies, professional bodies, and private industry regarding professional, educational, legislative, and regulatory issues. With the majority of registered osteopaths being members of Osteopathy Australia.

Osteopaths in Australia are university-qualified allied health practitioners who are registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Osteopaths complete either a dual bachelor or bachelor and master's qualification covering functions of anatomy, biomechanics, human movement, the musculoskeletal and neurological systems as well as clinical intervention approaches which are all underpinned by a biopsychosocial management approach.

Osteopath's role in low back pain

Osteopaths play a crucial role in the treatment and management of lower back pain. Osteopaths will conduct comprehensive functional examinations and employ evidence-based reasoning to management and clinical interventions. Osteopaths can provide advice on physical activity and exercise, position, posture, and movement in managing a diverse range of musculoskeletal impairments, with lower back pain being one of the most prevalent. Osteopaths work as an essential part of a multidisciplinary team working to get patients with low back pain recovered and back to work.

Osteopathy Australia thanks the State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) for the opportunity to provide feedback on the implementation of the Model of care for the management of low back pain – summary (summary model).

Recommendations

In response to the questions presented by SIRA, Osteopathy Australia recommends the following:

- SIRA must ensure all providers within the primary care team are aware of the summary model.
- SIRA should develop and provide e-learning resources that are relevant to each profession and the summary model.

Osteopathy Australia would like to thank and provide overall endorsement to SIRA on developing the summary model document and the patient factsheet as these are user-friendly and digestible versions to use in practice.

Key to the successful implementation of the summary model is ensuring that all providers are aware of the model and know how to effectively put the model into practice both as an individual provider and as a part of the wider primary care team.

This will require strong communication from SIRA to each registered provider that the summary model has been developed, endorsed, and now is to be implemented by each provider who is treating low back pain.

Further, SIRA should develop a range of e-learning models on the use of the summary model, how to effectively use the risk stratification tools, and how to effectively communicate with patients when using the model. These resources should take into consideration the different disciplines and professions that make up the primary care team and the different levels of knowledge and experience in managing low back pain within a compensation scheme. The more profession and knowledge-specific and relevant the training and resources are, the more likely the model will be effectively implemented by practitioners. E-learning resources could take the form of webinars that aim to educate the provider in the use of the model, using risk stratification tools in practice, and how to communicate with patients.

Additionally, and crucial to the best practice implementation of the summary model is ensuring that all members of the primary care team are actively adhering to the summary model and communicating effectively between the team and the patient. A cohesive approach to the implementation of the summary model will help to ensure that patients are receiving consistent and effective care.

Osteopathy Australia would again like to thank SIRA for the opportunity for consultation. For any additional information or comment, please reach out to us via phone at 02 9410 0099 or by email at clinicalpolicy@osteopathy.org.au.