

## Aged Care allied health needs assessment tool – online survey response

### About Osteopathy and Osteopathy Australia

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

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. Most registered osteopaths are members of Osteopathy Australia.

Osteopathy Australia thanks the Department of health and Aged Care for this opportunity to provide feedback.

### Feedback

While we are pleased to see the Department has taken the initiative to develop an assessment tool to identify the allied health needs of residents in aged care homes; we are disappointed that feedback is only being sought from a select few allied health professions rather than opening this opportunity to the wider sector. We are concerned that by only seeking representation from a few allied health professions, any tool developed will not be reflective of the variety of the sector or the needs of each profession resulting in a tool that is not fit for purpose. As such, we recommend that feedback is sought from all allied health professions working within the aged care sector, such as osteopathy.

We would also like to take this opportunity to highlight that there is still unresolved confusion of what is considered an allied health profession under the new Aged Care

Act 2024 and the associated Aged Care Rules. Under the New Aged Care Act Rules consultation – Release 1 – Service List, allied health has been defined as “a person who is registered under the National Law in an allied health profession”, which would include osteopathy as an Ahpra regulated profession. However, the Support at Home service list classifies osteopathy under the ‘therapeutic service for independent living’ category rather than the appropriate ‘allied health and therapy’ service type. Osteopathy Australia has met with the Resident Entitlements and Restorative Care Section on 14 February 2025 and discussed that the Department would clarify the wording and ensure osteopathy was included under ‘allied health and therapy’ service type on the Service List. The Department stated that it was not their intention to omit osteopaths from working in residential aged care and that the guidelines would be updated to reflect this. There has been no further clarification or confirmation about osteopathy’s status under the Support at Home service list or for residential care. We are calling on the Department to rectify this omission and re-categorise osteopathy to be under the ‘allied health and therapy’ category.

Osteopathy Australia would again like to thank the Department for the opportunity for consultation. For any additional information or comments, please get in touch with us by phone at 02 9410 0099 or by email at [clinicalpolicy@osteopathy.org.au](mailto:clinicalpolicy@osteopathy.org.au).