

Compare roles in health

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- ### Osteopath [1]

Osteopaths prevent, diagnose and treat a wide range of health problems using manual therapy, exercise and advise. Their aim is to promote the best health, based on the individual needs of the patient.

Training and qualifications required

To work as an osteopath, you will need either a Bachelor's (BSc) or Masters of Science (MSc) approved by the General Osteopathic Council and be registered with the Council. Courses typically last four to five years and are a combination of academic, research and more than 1,000 hours of hands-on patient-facing clinical training.

Expected working hours and salary range

Hours will vary, depending on where you work - for example if you have your own practice. The average income for an osteopath is £46,500. An associate (an osteopath working within an osteopathic or multidisciplinary practice) earns an average of £34,700, while the average for a practice principal is £71,000. Ten per cent of osteopaths earn over £100,000. (All figures provided from the 2014 Institute of Osteopathy census of the profession). Very few osteopaths are currently employed full-time by the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

To work in osteopathy, you will need a patient-centred approach, an interest in people and how the body works, the ability to work by yourself and think independently, to be able to follow rules, a scientific, enquiring mind, curiosity and creativity, integrity, and the ability to take responsibility.

Prospects

On graduation, most osteopaths choose to set up their own private clinics, working as a sole practitioner or with other healthcare professionals. They may then choose to pursue advanced clinical practice pathways through postgraduate training in a particular area of practice such as sports injuries, care of the elderly or working with children. There are also opportunities for study at MSc and PhD level. Non-clinical career roles also exist in teaching, professional development and research providing opportunities to create a varied portfolio career. In the NHS, osteopaths may choose to expand their post by taking on the management and leadership of a team or by pursuing an 'extended scope practitioner' role.

Related roles

- Physiotherapist [2]
- Podiatrist [3]
- Adult psychotherapist [4]
- Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [5]

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