Osteopathie

Professional Competency Profile Osteopathy





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To establish competencies in the field of osteopathy, we have drawn on the CanMEDS Framework¹, which defines seven main Roles that the physician is to fulfill: that of Medical Expert, Communicator, Collaborator, Scholar, Health Advocate, Manager and Professional.

Since the aim of these competency profiles is not only to provide information to laypersons, scholars and official bodies but also to serve as a basis for the development of a training profile, we have added a section, "Knowledge", to the Role descriptions, based on what has been set out in the SERV² model.

The description of each of the seven Roles is thus further broken down into different sections: Definition, Competencies, Indicators, Knowledge, and Attitudes & Skills.

- The *Definition* offers a general description of the Role that the osteopath is to fulfill.
- Competencies are defined as the appropriate behavior that an osteopath is expected to
 exhibit when fulfilling a given Role. By defining "competencies" as appropriate behaviors in
 osteopathy, knowledge, skills and attitudes are automatically intertwined and presented in
 an integrated fashion. Knowledge, skills and attitudes thus constitute the building blocks of
 competency, i.e. appropriate behavior.
- *Indicators* are used to describe the behavior that must be exhibited by a practitioner possessing the competency in question. The list of indicators affords students and laypersons better insight into what exactly the profession of osteopath entails.
- In the *Knowledge* section, we list the knowledge that underpins or supports the competency in question. Without this knowledge, the practitioner cannot exhibit the behavior described above. This section can be used as guidance when developing training profiles.
- Finally, we list the key *Attitudes & Skills* underlying the competency in question. Without these attitudes and skills, the practitioner cannot exhibit the behavior described above. This section will be useful for Human Resource Managers, career counsellors and recruiters.

The lists of underlying knowledge, attitudes and skills have been specifically developed for the users of these professional competency profiles. They form an integral part of the competency and underpin the behavior described. A practitioner is considered to possess a given competency if he exhibits the behavior described in the indicators. To be able to exhibit this behavior, he must possess the underlying knowledge and certain underlying attitudes.

¹ Frank J.R. (Ed). 2005. *The CanMEDS 2005 physician competency framework. Better standards. Better physicians. Better care.* Ottawa: The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

² Sociaal-Economische Raad van Vlaanderen (Economic and Social Council of Flanders)



Summary of the Osteopath's Competencies in terms of the Role Fulfilled in Primary Healthcare Provision

Role	Ţ	The Osteopath's Competencies
Osteopathic Expert		Places the patient at the center of the consultation and offers optimal, ethical care; Elicits the patient's medical history and conducts a complete physical examination as appropriate, and bases his diagnosis on the findings; Demonstrates proficient and appropriate use of diagnostic and therapeutic skills; Treats the patient in an effective and timely manner in keeping with his preventive and therapeutic duties; Seeks appropriate consultation from a colleague or other health professional, recognizing the limits of his expertise as osteopath; Maintains knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to his osteopathic practice.
Communicator		Establishes rapport, trust and an ethically appropriate relationship with the patient; Accurately elicits and synthesizes relevant information and perspectives from the patient and any family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision; Accurately conveys relevant information and explanations to the patient and any family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision; Effectively conveys oral and written information about a medical consultation.
Collaborator	•••	Is willing and able to engage in multidisciplinary collaboration; Participates appropriately and effectively in an interprofessional healthcare team; Works effectively with healthcare colleagues to prevent, negotiate and resolve interprofessional conflict.
Scholar		Maintains and enhances his expertise through ongoing learning; Critically evaluates scientific information and its sources; Actively contributes to the scientific advancement of his profession; Actively promotes awareness of osteopathy among individuals, students, healthcare colleagues and the general public.
Health Advocate		Responds to patient questions and issues as part of patient care; Responds to the health needs of society; Contributes to improving the health of patients and society at large.
Manager		Efficiently organizes his work at his individual/group practice and/or medical center; Manages his practice and career; Manages administrative and financial matters; Deals efficiently with patient information.
Professional		Demonstrates a commitment to his patients, his profession and society through the provision of high-quality, effective patient care characterized by integrity and dedication; Demonstrates a commitment to his patients, his profession and society by respecting the legal guidelines governing his profession; Considers his own personal health and sustainable practice.



Osteopathic Expert

Definition:

The osteopath becomes an Osteopathic Expert by combining all of the Roles discussed here. In exploiting his medical qualities to the fullest, skilfully applying his medical expertise and exhibiting a professional attitude, the Osteopathic Expert is able to offer quality patient care. Core duties include: diagnosis, treatment, consultancy and assessment.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Places the patient at the center of the consultation and offers optimal, ethical care:
- Elicits the patient's medical history and conducts a complete physical examination as appropriate, and bases his diagnosis on the findings;
- Demonstrates proficient and appropriate use of diagnostic and therapeutic skills;
- Treats the patient in an effective and timely manner in keeping with his preventive and therapeutic duties;
- Seeks appropriate consultation from a colleague or other health professional, recognizing the limits of his expertise as osteopath;
- Maintains knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to his osteopathic practice.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Is able to organize his practice effectively, integrating all roles related to his practice:
- Identifies ethical issues in patient care and responds appropriately;
- Effectively and appropriately prioritizes professional duties when faced with multiple patients and issues;
- Identifies and explores the patient's priorities and preferences;
- Is able to elicit a patient's full medical history, assess important information from this history and interpret all relevant information drawn from clinical and paraclinical examinations;
- Ideally, prescribes additional diagnostic procedures as necessary in an appropriate, ethically responsible and effective manner; alternatively, refers the patient to a colleague authorized to do so;
- Conducts an in-depth, relevant osteopathic clinical examination that is tailored to the individual patient's case;
- Demonstrates effective clinical problem solving and judgment, including interpreting available data, generating a differential diagnosis and designing a treatment plan;
- Takes an integrated approach to assessment and examination in keeping with osteopathic principles and concepts;
- Implements an effective treatment plan in collaboration with the patient;
- Explains appropriate therapeutic techniques to the patient;
- Carries out appropriate osteopathic adjustments and mobilizations;
- Excludes possible contraindications to treatment;



Osteopathic Expert

- Explains potential timelines and expectations to the patient;
- Informs the patient of possible risks and adverse events;
- Keeps the patient informed of how the treatment is progressing;
- Adjusts the diagnosis when necessary;
- Analyses data on the evolution of both outcomes and processes related to a consultation series and adapts the treatment plan as necessary in consultation with the patient*;
- Is able to advise the patient as part of an appropriate and effective treatment and assistance plan that promotes the patient's health and well-being, is clearly formulated and is in line with the patient's wishes;
- Notes data in the patient record in a clear, transferable way;
- Is constantly vigilant of patient safety;
- Possesses healthy self-assessment skills that allow him to recognize the limits of his own expertise;
- As appropriate and effective, refers patients to other health professionals when this is needed to ensure optimal patient care;
- Arranges appropriate follow-up care for the patient;
- Applies relevant knowledge of the fundamental biomedical, clinical and socio-behavioral sciences to ensure effective clinical practice;
- Applies lifelong learning skills of the Scholar Role to keep up-to-date and enhance areas of professional competence;
- Contributes to the enhancement of quality care and patient safety in his osteopathic practice, integrating the available best evidence and best practices.

Knowledge:

- Basic communication skills;
- History-taking;
- Core medical knowledge;
- Osteopathic principles and concepts;
- Diagnosis by exclusion;
- Differential diagnosis;
- Establishing diagnosis within the framework of competencies;
- Clinical reasoning;
- Medical imaging;
- Clinical biology (laboratory procedures);
- Diagnostic palpation;
- Insights into semiology and related treatment methods;
- Osteopathic treatment techniques and contraindications;
- Practical execution of treatment techniques;
- Influence of lifestyle on health status;
- Potential and limitations of osteopathic care.

- Manual dexterity and extremely well-developed palpation skills;
- Technical approach to diagnostics and manual approach to treatment;
- Body awareness and motion perception;
- Application of esthetics and rhythm in the treatment process;

^{*} Or his representative or guardian



Osteopathic Expert

- Visualization;
- Communication and social skills;
- Active listening;
- Empathy;
- Discretion;
- Focus on service;
- Cooperation;
- Accuracy;
- Awareness of hygiene-related matters;
- Awareness of safety-related matters;
- Planning and organization;
- Consultancy skills.



Communicator

Definition:

The osteopath is able to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with patients, family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision. The osteopath is the patient's main point of contact before, during and after treatment. He is in contact with the patient both by telephone and in person. Cultivating an ethically correct, sincere and appropriately empathetic rapport with the patient facilitates a relationship based on trust, where information on the patient's health status can flow rapidly in both directions.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Establishes rapport, trust and an ethically appropriate relationship with the patient;
- Accurately elicits and synthesizes relevant information and perspectives from the patient and any family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision;
- Accurately conveys relevant information and explanations to the patient and any family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision;
- Understands the patient's complaints and issues, arrives at a consensus on these and develops a treatment plan together with the patient and any family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision;
- Effectively conveys oral and written information about a medical consultation.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Recognizes that good communication skills are at the core of the medical profession and that a good patient-osteopath relationship can lead to improved clinical outcomes and greater satisfaction on both sides:
- Establishes a positive therapeutic relationship with the patient, characterized by understanding, trust, respect, honesty and empathy;
- Respects the diverse and unique nature of each patient;
- Establishes first contact with the patient, introducing himself and his practice;
- Receives the patient and accompanies him through the organization of his practice;
- Listens actively and effectively to the patient's concerns, asks questions for clarification and/or supplementation and identifies the patient's issues and expectations;
- Where necessary, seeks out information from sources other than the patient, such as family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision;
- Is aware of and responds appropriately to non-verbal cues from the patient;



Communicator

- Treats sensitive patient information with respect to ensure that patient privacy and trust are not violated;
- Encourages the patient to take an active role in becoming aware of lifestyle issues and their impact on health status;
- Informs the patient of the potential and limitations of osteopathic care and, where appropriate, of the osteopath;
- Reassures the patient before, during and after treatment;
- Explains the diagnosis, treatment strategy and possible alternative treatment options using simple language, taking into account the patient's age, background, etc.;
- In a case of a more complex diagnosis, provides a detailed explanation of the causal web of patient dysfunction rather than providing a convenient diagnostic label;
- Provides information on possible risks, side effects, expected evolution and timeframe;
- Provides information to the patient and, where desired, to family members, colleagues and professionals from other areas of healthcare provision, encourages open discussion and involves them in decision making;
- Always obtains consent with respect to the treatment plan and the techniques used;
- Notes data in the patient record in a clear, transferable way;
- Reacts appropriately and humanely in challenging communication situations, such as delivering bad news and reacting to patient frustration, confusion or anger;
- When required, effectively presents medical information to the public or media about a medical issue;
- When required, and in keeping with the professional code of ethics, communicates with the judiciary.

Knowledge:

- Basic communication skills;
- Basic principles and concepts of osteopathic practice;
- Potential and limitations of osteopathic care;
- Influence of lifestyle on health status;
- Insight into semiology and the "gold standard" of treatment methods.

- Patient-centered communication;
- Ability to establish rapport, trust and ethically appropriate relationships;
- Empathy;
- Respect and discretion;
- Mutual understanding;
- Efficiency and accuracy;
- Calm and controlled manner;
- Expert in verbal and non-verbal communication;
- Focus on service;
- Active listening;
- Well-groomed appearance, in keeping with the profession's image.



Collaborator

Definition:

The osteopath maintains a good working relationship with colleagues and other healthcare providers to achieve optimal patient care. This good working relationship is increasingly important in today's multiprofessional, patient-centered society. Modern healthcare teams are not made up solely of healthcare providers from a single discipline, but will also involve professionals from different areas of healthcare, sometimes in multiple locations. It is also important for the osteopath to work positively and effectively with patients and interprofessional teams of experts from different fields of healthcare to achieve optimal care.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Is willing and able to engage in multidisciplinary collaboration;
- Participates appropriately and effectively in an interprofessional healthcare team;
- Works effectively with healthcare colleagues to prevent, negotiate and resolve interprofessional conflict.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Clearly describes his competencies to healthcare colleagues;
- Recognizes and respects the competencies, roles and responsibilities of other healthcare providers;
- Where appropriate, refers patients to other healthcare providers;
- Can work appropriately in a team and considers the consequences of his own actions;
- Can coordinate his own actions with those of others;
- Works with others to ensure optimal patient examination, treatment planning and care;
- Can take joint decisions;
- Works with colleagues on other tasks such as resolving research problems, educational planning or taking on shared administrative duties;
- Seeks out opportunities for collaboration where patient examination and care are conducted jointly, taking a multilateral approach involving different fields;
- Participates in interprofessional team meetings and takes on leadership roles where necessary;
- Is able to provide and accept feedback in a constructive and professional manner;
- Maintains interprofessional relationships;
- Respects team dynamics, ethics, confidentiality and professionalism;
- Avoids conflicts:
- Employs collaborative negotiation to resolve conflicts;
- Respects misunderstandings, differences and limitations in other professionals;
- Recognizes his own biases, differences and limitations.



Collaborator

Knowledge:

- Awareness of competencies, roles, responsibilities and limits of both his own and other healthcare professions;
- Communication and constructive negotiation.

- Communication;
- Reliability and dependability;
- Helpfulness and collegiality;
- Team spirit;
- Respect for diversity;
- Delegation;
- Sense of responsibility;
- Team leader;
- Conflict management.



Scholar

Definition:

The osteopath engages in a lifelong pursuit of maintaining his expertise by reading specialist literature, attending seminars and professional development courses and exchanging with colleagues. By conducting scientific research, disseminating findings, giving lectures and translating scientific works, the osteopath can contribute actively to the development of his profession.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Maintains and enhances his expertise through ongoing learning;
- Critically evaluates scientific information and its sources;
- Actively contributes to the scientific advancement of his profession;
- Actively promotes awareness of osteopathy among individuals, students, healthcare colleagues and the general public.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Establishes a plan for maintaining expertise through ongoing learning;
- Identifies sources of information for maintaining expertise;
- Constantly questions his own expertise;
- Integrates new learning into practice;
- Documents his learning process;
- Inquires into scientifically responsible questions, formulates and disseminates his findings;
- Conducts ethically responsible research or seeks proof in specialist literature;
- Identifies the need for knowledge concerning his profession;
- Selects an appropriate medium for the dissemination of knowledge to individuals, students, colleagues or the general public;
- Assesses his own transfer of knowledge.

Knowledge:

- Awareness of professional development course offerings, professional groups, seminars;
- Basic communication skills;
- Current scientific limitations of practice;
- Ethical rules relating to scientific research;
- Evidence-based research.

- Intellectual curiosity;
- Planning and organization;
- Self-assessment;
- Oral and written communication;
- Ethics.



Health Advocate

Definition:

As a Health Advocate, the osteopath uses his expertise and influence to advance the health and well-being of individual patients and society at large. The osteopath protects public health interests and conveys his fundamental convictions regarding health potentials. Where necessary, the osteopath refers patients to other healthcare providers for appropriate care.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Responds to patient questions and issues as part of patient care;
- Responds to the health needs of society;
- Contributes to improving the health of patients and society at large.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Identifies a patient's needs;
- Stay abreast of current developments in healthcare provision via relevant specialist literature and the media;
- Advises on prevention and provides information on health matters at an individual and societal level;
- Encourages patients to take responsibility for their own health;
- Is aware of health insurance benefits and compensation;
- Identifies his influence on the healthcare structure;
- Appreciates his role as healthcare provider with regard to patient health and safety.

Knowledge:

- Establishing diagnosis within the framework of competencies;
- Recognizing the need for other forms of care (red and yellow flags);
- Osteopathic treatment techniques and contraindications;
- Practical execution of treatment techniques;
- Potential and limitations of osteopathic care;
- Therapeutic and preventive functions of osteopathy;
- Influence of lifestyle on health status;
- Insights into motives for consultation and treatment methods;
- Insights into the psychological, biological, social, cultural and economic determinants of health;
- Health insurance structures;
- Healthcare structures.

- Analytical skills;
- Entrepreneurship;
- Awareness of safety-related matters;
- Planning and organization;
- Consultancy skills.



Manager

Definition:

The osteopath must fulfill the Role of Manager to organize his work effectively, whether he is running an individual or group practice as a self-employed professional or employed at a medical center. The osteopath, working individually or in a group, organizes his own work, sets his priorities, performs his duties, collaborates with colleagues, makes choices, meets administrative obligations, and balances all this effectively with his personal life. This Role requires the active engagement on the part of the osteopath as an integral participant and decision-maker in the operation of the healthcare system and as a guardian of quality osteopathic care as defined by the profession.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Efficiently organizes his work at his individual/group practice and/or medical center;
- Manages his practice and career;
- Manages administrative and financial matters;
- Deals efficiently with patient information.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Runs his practice in such a way as to ensure continuity of care;
- Manages his practice in compliance with professional guidelines;
- Meets his administrative, financial and social obligations;
- Positions his practice well and draws positive attention to it;
- Monitors his working conditions and strikes a good work-life balance;
- Manages his time and work schedule;
- Collaborates with colleagues;
- Constantly assesses himself, his practice and his career;
- Selects an appropriate patient record system and is responsible for patient data;
- Follows guidelines on protecting patient privacy;
- Meets his administrative obligations toward patients, health insurers and regulatory bodies.

Knowledge:

- Running a clinical practice;
- Awareness of Belgian and European legislation governing the medical profession in general and osteopathy in particular;
- Health insurance administration.

- Autonomous decision making;
- Orderliness;
- Accuracy;
- Negotiation;
- Planning and organization;
- Personal hygiene;
- Collaboration.



Professional

Definition:

A professional osteopath is expected to demonstrate his commitment to the health and well-being of individuals and society through ethical practice, respecting legal guidelines governing his profession and high personal standards of behavior.

Competencies:

The osteopath:

- Demonstrates a commitment to his patients, his profession and society through the provision of high-quality, effective patient care characterized by integrity and dedication;
- Demonstrates a commitment to his patients, his profession and society by respecting the legal guidelines governing his profession;
- Considers his own personal health and sustainable practice.

Indicators:

The osteopath:

- Exhibits appropriate professional behaviors in his practice, including honesty, integrity, commitment, respect, empathy and altruism;
- Strives to achieve the highest professional quality, knowledge, insights and care;
- Acts in an effective, solution-oriented and autonomous manner;
- Possesses critical insight into his own potential and limitations;
- Follows ethical, professional and legal guidelines;
- Is a positive example of the profession of osteopath;
- Responds appropriately to regulatory bodies;
- Responds appropriately to unprofessional behavior in others;
- Maintains appropriate relations with his patients;
- Balances professional and personal priorities to ensure personal health and a sustainable practice;
- Recognizes colleagues in need and responds appropriately.

Knowledge:

- Ethical, professional and legal guidelines;
- Awareness of Belgian and European legislation governing the medical osteopathic profession.

- Focus on quality;
- Altruism;
- Empathy;
- Self-confidence;
- Self-assessment;
- Moral standards;
- Responsibility;
- Honesty and integrity.

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