



# THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR OSTEOPATHIC HEALTHCARE

[www.isohc.org](http://www.isohc.org)

*Developing Osteopathic Practice*

Introducing our first project:

## THE 'SOMATIC' PROJECT

**focusing on infant feeding dysfunction**



STRUCTURING OUTCOME MEASURES AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR OSTEOPATHIC INFANT CARE

**Structuring Outcome Measures and Assessment Tools for osteopathic Infant Care. (SOMATIC)**

To consider which outcomes measures and assessment tools are relevant for use in the osteopathic care of infants, and to develop a specific tool for use in this field of care, with special initial focus on babies with infant feeding dysfunction.

Osteopaths receive approaches to evaluate infants with a range of disorders, the most common being infant feeding dysfunction, unsettledness and movement development (postural and structural development). Whilst efficacy on the use of osteopathic therapeutic interventions in these clinical situations is lacking, it is important to have a range of tools that help determine how infants are screened for care, how they might be referred and when, how to identify if there are factors that osteopaths can work with and which may be relevant to the care of the infants, and how this information can be captured / monitored in the form of patient reported outcome measures and patient reports of experience (PROM and PREM tools), and other assessment (evaluation and screening tools).

Which tools are recommended for osteopathic care of the newborn? How many osteopaths use them when working with infants, and are the tools relevant in the context of osteopathic care? These are all questions which have informed the development of the SOMATIC project. It may be that a development of an osteopathic specific tool is required if existing identified tools do not capture the domains of recovery identified by osteopaths as being relevant in their practice and health service delivery. Ultimately this project will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding osteopathic care, and the evidence base for the role of osteopaths in the care of infants. It will also contribute to the discussion to clarify that role and its boundaries, competence requirements and credentialing needs.

**To start the work of the SOMATIC project we are focusing on the care by osteopaths of infants with feeding dysfunction. Please read on to discover more about our project, and please visit our website to find the link to our funding page to consider making a donation in support of this project.**



## What does the project consist of?

There will be several phases, and the first sections are described below:

To aid service evaluation, practice audit and research, it is necessary to identify items or frameworks that can help in data review, and comparison, as part of investigatory process, all of which is necessary to contribute to evidence required for commissioning of health services.<sup>1</sup> Thus, identifying which tools can be used to undertake an audit is a first stage. To identify what services consist of, and what tools they refer to is a form of service evaluation. If there is a not relevant common tool that is or could be used in osteopathic practice it is necessary to clarify what the tool should or could be measuring, based on the current service being delivered.

There are also various stages in the development of both assessment (evaluation screening) tools and PROM (and PREM) tools (Charlotte Kingsley, 2017) and so the project consists of several initial elements which will provide a useful background to the above factors:

- 1) Developing a concept of 'domains of recovery' experienced in osteopathic infant care.
  - a. The DOROIC project,
    - i. This is a survey of current practice, which includes interviews with osteopaths working in this field of care, to consider what they feel should be domains of recovery covered by PROM and PREM forms / tools.
    - ii. and a literature review and scoping review to consider what outcomes measures are currently used in the care of infants with feeding disorders (by any healthcare profession) and mapping them against the range of domains of recovery considered of interest in osteopathic practice.

This will enable a consideration as to whether there is a need for a new PROM or PREM tool to be developed for use in osteopathic practice. Then the next stage:

- 2) Description of osteopathic care of infants with feeding disorders.
  - a. The OCIF project.
    - i. This is a survey of current practice, which is to identify osteopathic professionals' considerations when they are presented with an infant with feeding disorders in their clinics, focusing on what they assess and why, through the use of interviews with individual osteopaths working in this field of care.
    - ii. And a literature review and scoping review to consider which assessment tools are currently available (for any health profession) to evaluate infant feeding disorders, and to map them against factors osteopaths assess in their evaluation of infants presenting with infant feeding disorders. One example of review article here for interest (Pados, 2016)

- 3) Development of PROM, PREM and evaluation / assessment tools specific to osteopathic practice. The ISOHC is currently undertaking the first 2 stages of the project at this point.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nhsevidencetoolkit.net/what-is-evidence/>



## Ethical Framework For Stages 1 and 2.

After consulting the NHS Research Tool<sup>2</sup> and referring to other research ethics commentaries, such as Manchester University and University of Warwick publications<sup>3</sup>, it is determined that the data collection via surveys in the form of interviews, from professionals whom are working in the field being discussed does not pose significant risk to them as professionals as they are commenting on their area of competence. As this study also does not involve patients, and does not involve changing mode, method or choice of normal treatment and care-plans, there is deemed to be minimal risk to the public in these first two stages. Therefore, it has been determined that there is no requirement for a formal ethical review for these elements. This project therefore does not carry an IRAS number / application.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, it has been determined these components of the project will be undertaken using an **ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**, outlining consenting dynamics, use of data aims, record keeping, confidentiality, right to withdraw, anonymity and so on. Potential applicants to be interviewed will be provided with this form on their enquiry, and it will be available to download from the ISOHC website.

## Key Project Description

Somatic – doroiC

We are seeking 10 osteopaths who have experienced infants presenting to their clinics with infant feeding dysfunction. We would like to interview those osteopaths, in an unstructured, unguided format, to capture their views on how their feel infants have changed and what mothers report about changes, and what they (the osteopaths) look for regarding changes. The interviews will all be conducted by one person and will be recorded. Anonymised data will be transcribed by one person and selected samples will be reviewed by another. Data analysis of anonymised data will be thematic analysis and will use NVivo software. If you wish to help or be involved with the literature review section, please get in touch.

Somatic - ocif

We are seeking 10 osteopaths who have experienced infants presenting to their clinics with infant feeding dysfunction. We would like to interview those osteopaths, in an unstructured, unguided format, to capture their views on what the osteopaths do in terms of assessment and evaluation, and what they think their findings mean or represent. The interviews will all be conducted by one person and will be recorded. Anonymised data will be transcribed by one person and selected samples will be reviewed by another. Data analysis of anonymised data will be thematic analysis and will use NVivo software. If you wish to help or be involved with the literature review section, please get in touch.

Consent forms can be downloaded from [isohc.org](http://isohc.org)

## References

Charlotte Kingsley, M. B. (2017, April). Patient-reported outcome measures and patient-reported experience measures. *Volume 17*(Issue 4), Pages 137–144. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjaed/mkw060>

Pados, B. F. (2016). Assessment Tools for Evaluation of Oral Feeding in Infants Younger Than 6 Months. *Advances in neonatal care : official journal of the National Association of Neonatal Nurses*, *16*(2), 143–150.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/ethics/>

<sup>3</sup>

[https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross\\_fac/healthatwarwick/newsandevents/events/an\\_introduction\\_to/doclinicalauditprojectseverneedethicsapproval.pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/healthatwarwick/newsandevents/events/an_introduction_to/doclinicalauditprojectseverneedethicsapproval.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/>