

## Statement on osteopathy healthcare workforce need and supply

The concentration of the osteopathy workforce is mainly around metropolitan areas and sparse in rural and remote areas.

### What is Osteopathy Australia advocating for?

- Government funding for scholarships, incentives and subsidies to help support osteopaths to move and work in rural, regional and remote areas.
- The provision of more university course offerings in areas outside of metro Victoria to help to alleviate workforce maldistribution.
- More government funding into programs such as the GP Chronic Conditions Management Plan (GPCCMP) to better enable access to osteopathy.

### What do we want to achieve?

We want the community to have equitable access to osteopathy no matter their geographical location, to help improve their overall health and wellbeing.

### Why this benefits Australians

- Greater access to osteopathy services no matter where you reside.
- Increases the supply of allied healthcare professionals, creating a sustainable workforce for the future.
- Reduces the impact of current workforce shortages across Australia.
- Improves access and equity for Australians to healthcare.

### Policy issues and barriers

- Allied health professionals such as osteopaths, are not provided with any financial support or incentives to relocate and practice in rural and remote areas.
- There are currently only three universities that offer osteopathy as a course option, two of which are in Victoria.
- Students are more likely to live where they study hence concentrating the largest portion of the Osteopathy Australia in Victoria.
- According to a study about rural and remote practice, exposing students to rural and

remote practice can influence their decision to practice remotely.<sup>1</sup>

## The current workforce

The current osteopathic workforce is concentrated around metropolitan cities, especially in Melbourne, Victoria where 65% of the Osteopathy Australia membership works and resides.<sup>2</sup> This has predominately resulted from the concentration of the university courses in this region. The provision of funding support and university courses outside of Victoria will help support the distribution of the profession into other regions.

## Review

This statement will be reviewed as often as required to align with legislative, regulatory, policy and/or practice change. Last review: January 2026.

## Need more information or help?

For further information, a suggestion or to discuss this topic, please:

- Email your enquiry to [info@osteopathy.org.au](mailto:info@osteopathy.org.au)
- Call Osteopathy Australia on 1800 467 836
- Access further information via [www.osteopathy.org.au](http://www.osteopathy.org.au)

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<sup>1</sup> PubMed. Perceptions toward rural and remote practice: a study of final year occupational therapy students studying in regional university in Australia. Available from: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20868418/>

<sup>2</sup> Osteopathy Australia Membership Survey Report. 2022