

**OPERA project** ([www.opera-project.org](http://www.opera-project.org))

OPERA (Osteopathic Practitioners Estimates and Rates) is a study focused on conducting a census of osteopaths. Its primary goal is to identify and collect information on all active osteopaths in a given geographic area or at a national level. This study provides a comprehensive overview of the osteopathic population, including their educational backgrounds, competencies, specialisations, and other relevant information.

The OPERA project involves collaboration between osteopathy regulatory bodies, professional associations, academic institutions, and research organisations. These entities work together to develop a detailed and comprehensive questionnaire, which is distributed to all osteopaths in the area of interest. The questionnaire may include questions about professional qualifications, work experience, practice areas, specialisations, treatment methods, and other relevant information.

The OPERA census offers numerous benefits, including:

- 1. Monitoring the profession:** The census allows for an accurate estimate of the number of osteopaths and their demographic and professional characteristics. This information is essential for understanding the profession's trends over time, monitoring demographic or specialisation changes, and adjusting regulatory and educational policies accordingly.
- 2. Workforce planning:** Knowing the number of osteopaths and their geographical distribution helps in more accurately planning the healthcare workforce. This can assist in identifying any shortages of osteopaths in certain areas or specialisations and taking appropriate measures to ensure adequate and accessible patient coverage.
- 3. Research and evaluation:** The census of osteopaths provides a valuable database for research and evaluation in osteopathy. Scholars and researchers can use this information to conduct epidemiological studies, assess the effectiveness of osteopathic treatments, analyse patient outcomes, and identify trends and areas for improvement in osteopathic practice.
- 4. Regulation and policy:** The results of the osteopath census can be used by regulatory authorities to assess compliance with legislation and professional regulations. Furthermore, this information can guide the development of policies and standards for osteopathic practice, ensuring the quality and safety of treatment for patients.

5. **Networking and collaboration:** The osteopath census facilitates professional networking and collaboration. Creating a comprehensive database of osteopaths allows for sharing information, exchanging knowledge, and identifying opportunities for continuing education, collaborative research, and professional development.

Thus, the OPERA project represents a substantial effort to create a comprehensive overview of the osteopathic population by collecting reliable and valuable data to inform clinical practice, research, regulation, and healthcare system planning.