



Introduction to the issue and to Dr. Roger Engel new Associate Editor



As a new Associate Editor for the *International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine*, I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on continuing to deliver high quality articles for our readers. Before introducing the articles in this issue of the journal, some brief information about my background. I am an Australian osteopath with experience in clinical research, primarily in the field of chronic respiratory disease management and the use of manual therapy. I hold academic appointments at two Australian Universities, at an Australian public hospital as an Honorary Clinical Research Fellow and still see patients in private practice. As the Chief Investigator on clinical trials, I am aware of the disconnect that often exists between clinicians and researchers and believe that bridging that gap is integral to the future of our profession, especially in the context of evidence-based practice. The motivation behind me accepting a position on the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine* was that I could see a role for the journal in addressing this gap by helping to build a body of knowledge that was relevant to both clinicians and researchers.

The June issue of the journal is a good example of this as it contains articles for both groups. There are results from two randomized clinical trials (Wójcik et al. [1] and Ashour et al. [2]), two systematic reviews (Lam et al. [3] and Muddle et al. [4]) and a feasibility study (Acquati et al. [5]). The article by Wójcik et al. on the short-term effects of osteopathic treatment on stress performance in male athletes and the study by Ashour et al. on the effect of altering leg length on postural symmetry and dynamic balance are examples of research that readily translates into practice. Acquati et al.'s exploration on the feasibility of analysing the link between practitioner empathy and patient improvement in people with persistent musculoskeletal pain has the potential to inform evidence-based practice in the future. The two systematic reviews, one by Lam et al. on patient experience and patient satisfaction, perception and expectation following osteopathic manipulative treatment and the other by Muddle et al. on patient-centred communication skills and how they are being taught within manual therapy training programs for osteopaths, chiropractors and physiotherapists highlight the importance of patient-centred care. On a slightly different note, Zegarra-Parodi et al. [6] addresses the issue of religion and spirituality in the management of musculoskeletal conditions.

The June issue also includes three book reviews. The first by David Hohenschurz-Schmidt [7] takes the reader on a journey into the world of tensegrity while his second review covers the 2nd edition of *Fascial*

Dysfunction: Manual Therapy Approaches by Leon Chaitow [8], who sadly passed away in September 2018. The June issue also includes an article by a student, Sabrina Atkinson, who reviewed Josephine Key's *Freedom to Move*, a book that looks at the field of exercise and holistic spinal health [9]. I am delighted to see a book review by a student and welcome further contributions from those currently enrolled as students.

In trying to provide a forum for discourse and debate on osteopathy and neuromusculoskeletal medicine, I hope you find the articles in this issue of the *International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine* both interesting and thought provoking.

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