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Results and Implications of Osteopathic Spinal Fellowship work carried out by Susan Nicholson at QMC Hospital, Nottingham.

I have recently completed my Spinal Fellowship at Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham. This opportunity now allows me to treat patients with complex spinal pathologies. It also allows me to transfer these skills to the practice at Stamford. This work was funded by the British Osteopathic Association in collaboration with QMC.

The post involved working alongside Spinal Consultants in theatre and outpatient's clinics at the hospital. In addition, time was spent in Radiology, Pain Management (Spinal injection theatre) Sports Medicine, Physiotherapy, Podiatry and ESP triage. These clinic rotations allowed me to gain knowledge of the types of treatment techniques and protocols carried out.

Surgical work in theatre allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the surgical procedures as well as types of instrumentation used in the treatment of spinal patients. This knowledge is key in understanding how osteopathy can be used to further resolve patients' problems post surgery. Indeed, understanding more fully the treatment protocols and treatment modalities that have been tried for patients helps in the future osteopathic management of such cases.

At QMC Spinal Unit I have now put in place a robust data collection and analysis system in order to evaluate the effects of osteopathic treatment on patients who present at the Spinal unit. Data is collected from all patients that are treated with osteopathy. The patients that are being treated osteopathically are ones that have had surgical procedures and, or have exhausted all other forms of treatment offered to them (e.g. Pain Management - injection or pain medication, Physiotherapy, Surgery etc.). This set up should now generate osteopathic data that will demonstrate the effectiveness of osteopathic treatment in patients with spinal pathologies. It should allow our profession to quantify its benefits as an effective treatment modality for patients presenting with spinal problems. This in turn may offer patients a post surgical treatment option if required.

Furthermore, the osteopathic provision at QMC provides the Spinal Unit and G.P's who use the provision a more cost-effective treatment for their patients. This provision of osteopathic treatment is now available at the Centre of Osteopathy, formerly known as the Stamford Osteopathic Clinic.

This work is starting to demonstrate the benefit that Osteopathy can play in the treatment of complex Spinal Problems.