

Osteopathic Medicine General Information

What is Osteopathic Medicine?

Osteopathy is a philosophy of medicine that places the focus on the patient in whatever field of medicine the physician wishes to pursue, whether it be family medicine or neurosurgery.

Physicians trained in the Osteopathic Principles and Practice are taught to focus on normal structure and function and recognize how a patient's body, mind and spirit are interconnected in support of the body's inherent ability toward health and self-healing. They help their patients develop attitudes and lifestyles that don't just fight illness but help prevent it.

What is a D.O.?

Osteopathic physicians (D.O.s) and allopathic physicians (M.D.s) are the two physician medical practitioners recognized by the Federation of State Medical Boards who are licensed to prescribe medications and perform surgery. All physicians – D.O.s and M.D.s – must pass a three-part medical board examination to meet licensing requirements to practice medicine.

Osteopathic physicians attend medical schools in the United States completing a four-year curriculum. Following graduation, osteopathic physicians accomplish residency training through programs accredited by the American Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). D.O.'s can choose to practice in any medical or surgical specialty, with training typically ranging from three (3) to seven (7) years.

Osteopathic Principles

Osteopathic Philosophy embraces the idea of the unity of structure (anatomy) and function (physiology). There are four (4) main principles of osteopathic medicine:

- The body is a unit, and the person represents a combination of body, mind and spirit.
- The body is capable of self-regulation, self-healing and health maintenance.
- Structure and function are reciprocally interrelated.
- Rational treatment is based on an understanding of these principles: body unity, self-regulation, and the interrelationship of structure and function.

Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT)

Osteopathic physicians are trained to use their hands to diagnose, treat and prevent illness and injury. OMT is an additional skill in the osteopathic physician's toolbox used to contribute in caring for their patients. Through OMT, D.O.'s manually engage patients' joints and soft tissues through a variety of techniques including stretching, gentle pressure and resistance.

OMT has the potential to ease pain, promote healing and increase overall mobility for patients of all ages. Where appropriate, it can complement, minimize, or reduce the need for drugs or surgery.

Osteopathic Medical Student Oath of Commitment

As I embark upon the study of medicine at the Noorda College of Osteopathic Medicine, I will enter into a relationship of mutual respect with my teachers and my colleagues to enhance the learning environment and gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes of an exemplary physician. I accept responsibility only for those matters for which I am competent, maintaining the trust expected of a physician. I will be ever cognizant of the human and medical needs of each patient acknowledging that healing also involves the spirit and that a physician must exemplify humane, holistic and compassionate care. I will value the knowledge and wisdom of the physicians who have preceded me and endeavor to contribute to this tradition. I will recognize my strengths and my weaknesses and strive to develop those qualities that will earn the respect of my patients, my colleagues, my family and myself. I will continue this learning throughout all the days of my life.

The Osteopathic Oath

I do hereby affirm my loyalty to the profession I am about to enter.

I will be mindful always of my great responsibility to preserve the health and the life of my patients, to retain their confidence and respect both as a physician and a friend who will guard their secrets with scrupulous honor and fidelity, to perform faithfully my professional duties, to employ only those recognized methods of treatment consistent with good

judgment and with my skill and ability, keeping in mind always nature's laws and the body's inherent capacity for recovery.

I will be ever vigilant in aiding in the general welfare of the community, sustaining its laws and institutions, not engaging in those practices, which will in any way, bring shame or discredit upon myself or my profession. I will give no drugs for deadly purposes to any person, though it be asked of me.

I will endeavor to work in accord with my colleagues in a spirit of progressive cooperation, and never by word or by act cast imputations upon them or their rightful practices.

I will look with respect and esteem upon all those who have taught me my art. To my college I will be loyal and strive always for its best interests and for the interests of the students who will come after me. I will be ever alert to further the application of basic biologic truths to the healing arts and to develop the principles of osteopathy which were first enunciated by Andrew Taylor Still.

AOA Code of Ethics

The American Osteopathic Association has formulated this Code to guide its member physicians in their professional lives. The standards presented are designed to address the osteopathic physician's ethical and professional responsibilities to patients, to society, to the AOA, to others involved in healthcare and to self.

Further, the American Osteopathic Association has adopted the position that physicians should play a major role in the development and instruction of medical ethics.

Section 1.

The physician shall keep in confidence whatever she/he may learn about a patient in the discharge of professional duties. The physician shall divulge information only when required by law or when authorized by the patient.

Section 2.

The physician shall give a candid account of the patient's condition to the patient or to those responsible for the patient's care.

Section 3.

A physician-patient relationship must be founded on mutual trust, cooperation and respect. The patient, therefore, must have complete freedom to choose her/his physician. The physician must have complete freedom to choose patients whom she/he will serve. However, the physician should not refuse to accept patients because of the patient's race, creed, color, sex, national origin or handicap. In emergencies, a physician should make her/his services available.

Section 4.

A physician is never justified in abandoning a patient. The physician shall give due notice to a patient or to those responsible for the patient's care when she/he withdraws from the case so that another physician may be engaged.

Section 5.

A physician shall practice in accordance with the body of systematized and scientific knowledge related to the healing arts. A physician shall maintain competence in such systematized and scientific knowledge through study and clinical applications.

Section 6.

The osteopathic medical profession has an obligation to society to maintain its high standards and, therefore, to continuously regulate itself. A substantial part of such regulation is due to the efforts and influence of the recognized local, state and national associations representing the osteopathic medical profession. A physician should maintain membership in and actively support such associations and abide by their rules and regulations.

Section 7.

Under the law a physician may advertise, but no physician shall advertise or solicit patients directly or indirectly through the use of matters or activities, which are false or misleading.

Section 8.

A physician shall not hold forth or indicate possession of any degree recognized as the basis for licensure to practice the healing arts unless he is actually licensed on the basis of that degree in the state in which she/he practices. A physician shall designate her/his osteopathic school of practice in all professional uses of her/his name. Indications of specialty practice, membership in professional societies, and related matters shall be governed by rules promulgated by the American Osteopathic Association.

Section 9.

A physician should not hesitate to seek consultation whenever she/he believes it advisable for the care of the patient.

Section 10.

In any dispute between or among physicians involving ethical or organizational matters, the matter in controversy should first be referred to the appropriate arbitrating bodies of the profession.

Section 11.

In any dispute between or among physicians regarding the diagnosis and treatment of a patient, the attending physician has the responsibility for final decisions, consistent with any applicable osteopathic hospital rules or regulations.

Section 12.

Any fee charged by a physician shall compensate the physician for services actually rendered. There shall be no division of professional fees for referrals of patients.

Section 13.

A physician shall respect the law. When necessary, a physician shall attempt to help to formulate the law by all proper means in order to improve patient care and public health.

Section 14.

In addition to adhering to the foregoing ethical standards, a physician shall recognize a responsibility to participate in community activities and services.

Section 15.

It is considered sexual misconduct for a physician to have sexual contact with any current patient whom the physician has interviewed and/or upon whom a medical or surgical procedure has been performed.

Section 16.

Sexual harassment by a physician is considered unethical. Sexual harassment is defined as physical or verbal intimation of a sexual nature involving a colleague or subordinate in the workplace or academic setting, when such conduct creates an unreasonable, intimidating, hostile or offensive workplace or academic setting.

Section 17.

From time to time, industry may provide some AOA members with gifts as an inducement to use their products or services. Members who use these products and services as a result of these gifts, rather than simply for the betterment of their patients and the improvement of the care rendered in their practices, shall be considered to have acted in an unethical manner. (Approved July 2003)

Section 18.

A physician shall not intentionally misrepresent himself/herself or his/her research work in any way.

Section 19.

When participating in research, a physician shall follow the current laws, regulations and standards of the United States or, if the research is conducted outside the United States, the laws, regulations and standards applicable to research in the nation where the research is conducted. This standard shall apply for physician involvement in research at any level and degree of responsibility, including, but not limited to, research, design, funding, participation either as examining and/or treating provider, supervision of other staff in their research, analysis of data and publication of results in any form for any purpose.

Noorda-COM Professionalism, Competencies and Student Outcomes

Noorda-COM's core values include cultural awareness, ethical leadership, embracing diversity and inspiring a servant's heart towards caring for the poor and needy. The College believes in graduating students who can provide exemplary and professional care to their patients.

Noorda-COM students are expected to be responsible individuals who possess the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and personal conduct. Accordingly, students are expected to comply with institutional rules and to uphold and carry out the high standards of the osteopathic medical profession.

Noorda-COM has an active quality improvement program. The quality improvement process engages all stakeholders in the assessment and improvement of the educational processes that support the delivery of College curricula. Specifically, assessment focuses on the following:

- Mission and Strategic Planning
- Governance
- Student Outcomes
- Curricula
- Leadership, Community Service and Social Responsibility
- Support Services
- Resource Allocation and Program Costs
- Faculty and Staff
- Contributions to other programs
- Student, Stakeholder and Market Focus
- Research and Scholarship

Students are an integral part of the College's quality improvement process, as such students are occasionally asked to complete surveys, participate in focus groups or serve on committees responsible for academic quality improvement. In fact, students are encouraged to participate, and participation is considered to be an important component of professionalism.

Students can be assured that their participation in all quality enhancement processes is confidential; all information utilized is strictly guarded to ensure anonymity.

The College of Osteopathic Medicine's curriculum is designed to ensure graduates are able to demonstrate specific skills. The College has identified select educational objectives that serve as the foundation of the curriculum. At a minimum, a graduate must be able to:

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of osteopathic philosophy and practice and osteopathic manipulative treatment
- Demonstrate medical knowledge through all of the following:
 - Demonstrating proficiency in core curricular content
 - Standardized exams of the NBOME
 - End-of-clerkship exams
 - Research activities
 - Presentations
 - Participation in directed reading programs and/or journal clubs
 - Evidence based medical activities
- Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills with patients and other healthcare professionals
- Demonstrate knowledge of professional, ethical, legal, practice management, and public health issues applicable to medical practice
- Demonstrate basic clinical skills as assessed by nationally standardized evaluations.

Competencies

In addition, the College of Osteopathic Medicine's curriculum prepares students for graduate medical education. Graduates meet the following minimal competencies:

COMPETENCY 1: Osteopathic Philosophy and Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine

Graduates are expected to demonstrate and apply knowledge of accepted standards in Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT). The education goal is to train a skilled and competent osteopathic practitioner who remains dedicated to lifelong learning and to practice habits consistent with osteopathic principles and practices.

COMPETENCY 2: Medical Knowledge

Graduates are expected to demonstrate and apply knowledge of accepted standards of clinical medicine in their respective specialty area, remain current with new developments in medicine, and participate in life-long learning activities, including research.

COMPETENCY 3: Patient Care

Graduates must demonstrate the ability to effectively treat patients, provide medical care that incorporates osteopathic principles and practices, empathy, awareness of behavioral issues, preventive medicine and health promotion.

COMPETENCY 4: Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Graduates are expected to demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that enable them to establish and maintain professional relationships with patients, families and other members of health care teams.

COMPETENCY 5: Professionalism

Graduates are expected to uphold the Osteopathic Oath in the conduct of their professional activities that promote advocacy of patient welfare, adherence to ethical principles, collaboration with health professionals, life-long learning, and sensitivity to diverse patient populations. Graduates should be cognizant of their own physical and mental health in order to effectively care for patients.

COMPETENCY 6: Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

Graduates must demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate their methods of clinical practice, integrate evidence-based medicine into patient care, show an understanding of research methods, and improve patient care practices.

COMPETENCY 7: Systems-Based Practice

Graduates are expected to demonstrate an understanding of health-care delivery systems, provide effective and qualitative patient care with the system, and practice cost-effective medicine.