

14. March 2023

To whom it may concern

Osteopathy is a statutory regulated primary healthcare profession in the Nordic region

The Nordic Osteopathic Alliance (NOA) constitutes the five Nordic osteopathic associations, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The title "osteopath" is protected, and the profession is fully regulated as a first contact healthcare profession in four out of five Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway. Osteopathy has been regulated in Finland since 1994, Iceland passed its regulation in 2005, Denmark in 2018, and Norway in 2022 [1].

Globally, osteopathy is long recognised as an independent healthcare profession, defined as such by the World Health Organisation (WHO), as stated by the "WHO Benchmarks for training in Osteopathy" (2010) [2], as well as by the European Union's Comité Européen de Normalisation, "Osteopathic Healthcare Provision", CEN 16686:2015 [3].

The Nordic Osteopathic Alliance works to promote regulation for osteopathy, based on the CEN standard and the WHO benchmark document. We support high standards for osteopathic education, delivered in the format of university-based degrees based on ECTS, supported by a transcript of records compliant with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for higher education.

Regulation of the osteopathic profession is essential to ensure that the provision of osteopathic healthcare follows the same high standards, as applies to professional healthcare in general. The osteopaths role as a primary contact, underlines the need to regulate the profession, when working within or alongside the national health services. Osteopaths provide safe and effective treatment for patients with musculoskeletal disorders, and are helping to reduce waiting lists for care.

Harmonization of regulation across borders will ensure European citizens access to a properly educated and safe osteopath. It will promote academic and professional exchange within the profession and with other healthcare services and enable qualified healthcare professionals to cross borders.

On behalf of the Nordic Osteopathic Alliance,

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