



Osteopathy, Mindfulness and Acceptance-based Programme for People with Persistent Pain

Patient Information Sheet

Introduction

This information sheet is for people with persistent musculoskeletal pain who are interested in taking part in an OsteoMAP course at The European School of Osteopathy (ESO) Teaching Clinic. The information sheet explains how OsteoMAP courses are different from standard osteopathic treatment and answers frequently asked questions about the benefits and possible risks of taking part.

What is the purpose of the OsteoMAP course?

Research has shown that people with persistent pain can gain benefits from multidisciplinary healthcare and that self-management programmes can help to improve emotional health and decrease reliance on medication and treatment. For several years, the ESO has been offering individual pain management courses which aim to help people with long-term pain to find effective coping strategies and ways to live fuller lives, despite pain. Each course is for one patient at a time (i.e. no group work), and consists of six, weekly one-hour sessions which combine osteopathic treatment with mindfulness and home practices to help to develop new self-care skills.

Who is the course designed for?

The course is for people who have had pain for more than six months, who gain some benefit from osteopathic treatment (or could gain benefit) but have symptoms that may not resolve completely with manual therapy alone. You are welcome to discuss the course with your GP, osteopaths who are already treating you or the OsteoMAP team at the ESO. If you are interested in taking part, we will ask you to fill in an application form and then contact you to arrange a pre-course meeting at a convenient time and place, probably before or after an existing clinic appointment if you are already a patient at the ESO.

What happens on an OsteoMAP course?

Firstly, you would be invited to attend an individual meeting with one of the team to discuss what you would like to gain and whether the course might be helpful for you. If we agree that it would be appropriate for you to take part, we will offer you a place on the next course. Each session involves a mixture of osteopathic treatment, discussions about the impact of pain in your life, and

activities to help you learn about your body, reactions to pain, what your symptoms mean and different ways of managing discomfort. The aim is to help you to create a more flexible, fulfilling life. We have found that the course works best for people who are willing to take part in the activities fully and explore different ways of coping with pain, but all activities are optional, and you do not have to do anything you do not feel comfortable about. You would continue with any normal medical treatment during the course, but we will ask you not to have osteopathic treatment in the ESO general clinic or with another osteopath for the 6 weeks of the OsteoMAP course, as you will receive treatment in OsteoMAP sessions. If you decide that the course is not right for you, you can stop at any time and return to your previous care.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Research has shown that people who practice mindfulness skills and take part in acceptance-based courses can feel able to cope more effectively with their symptoms. We hope that you will gain a better understanding of the way pain currently affects your life and develop new ways of managing discomfort or distress that enable you to return to more active, fulfilling ways of living life.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The course may differ from previous osteopathic treatment because we will be working together, and you will be asked to be an active participant in choosing directions for treatment and practising new coping skills at home. A lot of learning occurs in between the weekly sessions, and it is helpful if you can set aside about 15 minutes each day for home practice. Osteopathic treatment is provided by a team consisting of qualified and student osteopaths. Serious reactions to treatment are rare and occur in less than one in over 100,000 consultations. The course involves practising mindfulness skills and it is quite common to notice your pain more at the start. This is likely to mean that your awareness is increasing, rather than you are getting worse. You will also be asked to think about how pain affects your life. This can be upsetting or depressing, which can feel frustrating, but it is often an important, necessary part of learning to cope differently. This course involves experimenting with gentle physical movements and mindful approaches to activities we do in normal daily life. If you feel unsure about anything, you are welcome to discuss it with the OsteoMAP team, your GP or usual healthcare practitioners.

When are OsteoMAP courses available?

Courses run on Tuesday afternoons at the ESO Teaching Clinic (104 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone ME16 8SL – 01622 685989). Cost per session is £32.

If you have questions or would like further information, please contact the OsteoMAP clinic tutor: Louise James louise.james@bcnogroup.ac.uk