The Effects of OMT Clinical Exposure on Confidence Levels of
Lisa N. Roloson, OMS III, Danielle Defoe, OMS III, Min-Kyung Jung, PhD, To Shan Li, DO, Sheldon C. Yao, DO.

New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine in Old Westbury

Context: Training in osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) is a unique component of the osteopathic medical school curriculum. Indicators of success include student comfort in explaining and performing OMT as well as confidence in using OMT on future patients. Research on the amount of clinical exposure sufficient to achieve this goal is limited.

Objective: To quantify the impact of clinical OMT exposure on students’ self-assessed understanding and comfort in discussing and performing OMT in their future practices.

Hypothesis: The students’ level of comfort and confidence will increase with increased experience in the OMT clinic.

Methods: IRB approval was obtained by the NYIT-IRB #BHS-1047. Fourth year osteopathic medical students were emailed a total of five identical surveys; one initial and one follow up after each week of the four week OMT clinical rotation. Answers were scaled from 0-10 with 0 being not at all comfortable/confident and 10 being the most comfortable/confident.

Results: The comfort/confidence levels significantly increased from pre- to post- exposure in the understanding of OMT principles (7.43 (1.16); 8.93 (0.92); (p<0.001), comfort discussing OMT principles with patients (7.50 (1.29); 8.40 (1.02); (p=0.001), comfort performing an osteopathic structural examination (6.71 (1.44); 8.86 (0.95); (p<0.001), and confidence incorporating OMT into treatment plans (7.00 (1.56); 8.57 (1.22); (p=0.002). The mean percent change from pre- to post- exposure was 22.3%, 18.50%, 38.30%, and 27.10%, respectively.

Conclusion: The data collected suggests that there is a statistically significant, positive impact on student self-assessed understanding, comfort, and confidence levels after a four week OMT clinical rotation. This observation can be implemented in the development of osteopathic clinical programming and to conduct future education studies. Future studies may investigate similar parameters in OMT naïve students and allopathic students/physicians.