Proposal for an Osteopathic Entrustable Professional Activity (EPA)

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1. EPAs relate physician competencies to clinical activities and provide a way to "tie the assessment of competence to essential clinical activities that define the profession."²

2. Osteopathic Core Competencies are reflected in allopathic EPAs. Residency Program Directors under the single accreditation system should expect Osteopathic Interns to be entrustable with allopathic EPAs. COMs should consider entrustability with allopathic professional activities as a milestone of osteopathic competence.

3. EPAs describe essential clinical activities but they don’t necessarily cover all competencies. Despite the representation of Osteopathic Principles and Practices (OPP) in allopathic EPAs, our analysis reveals additional osteopathically distinctive competencies that do not pertain to allopathic EPAs. COMs can and should set goals for student education beyond EPAs, but the profession should consider whether competencies not covered in allopathic EPAs constitute a distinctive clinical activity. Osteopathic physicians develop distinctive diagnoses and treatment plans by using concepts of health, self-healing, and restoration of homeostasis in their clinical reasoning.

4. Integrating Osteopathic Principles and Practice into clinical practice is an essential clinical activity that defines the Osteopathic profession. Allopathic EPAs do not include this essential activity. Embedding osteopathic competencies in allopathic EPAs is worthwhile to show Osteopathic similarity. However, our analysis shows that some but not all aspects of OPP and other distinctively osteopathic competencies are represented in the allopathic EPAs. To address gaps after embedding the Osteopathic Core Competencies in the allopathic EPAs, we propose an Osteopathic EPA that also spotlights an essential clinical activity that defines the profession.

References
2. Ian Cate, O, Snell, L, Carraccio, C. Medical competence: The interplay between individual ability and the health care environment. Med Teach. 2010, 32, pp. 669-675.