Are dermatology clinicians trained to deliver behaviour change in people with psoriasis?

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BACKGROUND: Psoriasis is associated with cardiovascular disease risk, with lifestyle behaviour change (LBC) key to patient management. Health professionals, well placed to support LBC, lack the skills to do so. We systematically examined core training documents across general and dermatology specialist health professionals for evidence of LBC competencies.

METHODS: Training documents from UK professional accrediting groups content analysed to examine: a) health promotion and LBC as part of the professional role; and/or b) health promotion and LBC as explicit training competencies.

FINDINGS: References to health promotion and LBC mostly appeared in the General Practitioner curriculum (n=42), followed by the Dermatology Specialist Nurse curriculum (n=14) and Dermatologist curriculum (n=11). None was found in the General Practitioner with a Special Interest in Dermatology curriculum. There was no evidence of clearly specified LBC knowledge, skills and attitudes; only basic level competencies were described.

DISCUSSION: Given the evidence linking unhealthy lifestyles with psoriasis outcomes, specialist health professionals training must include LBC competencies to support psoriasis patients.