Exploring psoriasis patients’ experiences of CVD risk discussions with primary care practitioners: A qualitative study

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INTRODUCTION: Cardiovascular disease (CVD) screening occurs in primary care settings in the UK. There may be particular benefits of attending screenings for people with psoriasis because engagement in unhealthy lifestyle behaviours in this patient group is high. This study aimed to explore psoriasis patients’ experiences of discussing CVD risk with primary care practitioners

METHODS: Semi-structured interviews were used to explore views and experiences of 29 people with psoriasis who had taken part in an audio-recorded CVD risk assessment. ‘Tape-assisted-recall’ informed questioning and data were analysed using Framework Analysis principles.

RESULTS: Patients reported 1) learning little new or personally meaningful ‘knowledge and understanding about CVD risk’; 2) ‘strong emotional reactions to risk discussions’; and 3) ‘minimal risk discussion with practitioners’ during consultations.

CONCLUSION: The findings suggest that risk discussions during CVD screening consultations with people with psoriasis may be limited by practitioners not assessing patients’ pre-existing understanding of risk, addressing emotional reactions to risk discussions, or tailoring discussion about CVD risk and ways to reduce risk according to patients’ individual concerns. Facilitating practitioners to address these issues could improve the effectiveness of CVD screening consultations.