“Time to nudge?” Using choice architecture to understand health promotion signposting for people with psoriasis.

C. Keyworth¹, P.A. Nelson¹, L. Cordingley¹,², C.E.M. Griffiths ¹,³, C. Bundy¹,²

Affiliations
¹Manchester Centre for Dermatology Research, Institute of Inflammation and Repair, University of Manchester; ²Manchester Centre for Health Psychology, University of Manchester; ³Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, Manchester Academic Health Science Centre, Manchester, UK

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BACKGROUND: Lifestyle behaviour change (LBC) is an important aspect of psoriasis management. Traditional approaches to LBC aim to improve attitudes and knowledge about LBC through written and visual information; with often modest effects on behaviour. Recent studies show health-related behaviour can be triggered by environmental cues. If and how LBC signposting within health care centres is conforming to such recommendations is unclear. We performed an observational study to investigate how general and psoriasis-specific LBC information is made available to patients in primary and secondary care health centre waiting areas.

METHODS: An observation schedule was designed to record prevalence and quality of leaflets and posters signposting LBC. Content analysis was used to analyse the frequency, characteristics and standard of LBC materials in health centres in NW England.

RESULTS: A total of 262 sources of LBC information were recorded (median per site = 10, range= 0-40) across 24 health centres. These were mainly: generic posters/displays of LBC support (n = 113; 43.1%); and generic materials available in waiting areas (n = 98; 37.4%). Information was of poor quality and poorly displayed. No high quality psoriasis-specific patient materials were identified.

CONCLUSION: There is an urgent need to provide better LBC signposting to patients with psoriasis in the health centre environment. Evidence about the use of environmental cues to prompt behavioural change should inform the design and display of LBC information. Future work should examine whether this can induce sustained changes to improve long-term health.