The Pso Well study: Training dermatology specialist staff to manage lifestyle behaviour change in psoriasis.

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BACKGROUND: Psoriasis is an immune mediated long-term condition associated with significant physical, psychological, and social consequences. It is a complex condition associated with a number of co-morbidities including cardiovascular disease, psoriatic arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease. Depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation are also high in this population.

Self-management including medication adherence, engagement in healthy lifestyle behaviours and mood management is key to optimal psoriasis management but is rarely discussed adequately in clinical practice and rarely managed.

OBJECTIVES: Our early research showed healthcare practitioners feel ill-equipped to manage these topics in practice and both practitioners and patients have identified a training need in this area. Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based patient-centered communication approach to enhancing people’s ability to change important health related behaviours. This study aimed to train healthcare practitioners working with people with psoriasis in motivational interviewing techniques to enhance self-management in psoriasis.

METHODS: Feasibility and acceptability study of an intensive one-day training course for practitioners working with people with psoriasis. Participants include consultant and trainee dermatologists, specialist dermatology nurses, and general practitioners with and without a special interest in dermatology. Recruitment is currently underway and a total of 50 practitioners are anticipated to take part from a range of healthcare settings across the UK.

Outcome measures include a pre- post-training objective structured clinical examination of motivational interviewing techniques. Data are audio-recorded and analysed objectively by an independent analysis team using the BECCI (an 11-item validated measure of motivational interviewing skills). A pre- and post-training questionnaire developed by the authors is also included to assess change in practitioners’ knowledge about psoriasis (particularly knowledge relating to co-morbidities and risk factors associated with the condition). Patient actors (simulated patients) will also provide immediate written feedback on practitioners’ communication skills following each pre- and post-training consultation. Actors will provide their reflections following each consultation as well as rating the extent to which practitioners displayed core communication skills on a 5-item scale.

Approximately 30 qualitative interviews will be conducted with practitioners following the training to explore their views and experiences of the training (acceptability of training content), and the extent to which they were able to transfer the skills learned into clinical practice (perceived feasibility of using skills in practice). Any issues with study design including recruitment to the study, and completion of study measures, will also be explored with practitioners during interviews (acceptability of study design/procedures).

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION: Data collection is currently underway. The study results are anticipated to indicate the extent to which this training may change practitioners’ skills and knowledge in the context of enhancing psoriasis management. The findings will also have implications for future research designs aiming to determine the efficacy of this training intervention. This study may inform future training for practitioners working with people with psoriasis and if shown to be efficacious may have benefits for patient care, and patient outcomes related to psoriasis.