Delivering lifestyle behaviour change for patients with psoriasis: Assessing the healthcare professional core training competencies

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BACKGROUND: Unhealthy lifestyle behaviours (smoking, excess alcohol use and being overweight and sedentary) are linked both to poorer psoriasis outcomes and are key risk factors for cardiovascular disease and diabetes. This makes lifestyle behaviour change (LBC) central to psoriasis management. Healthcare professionals managing psoriasis patients have the opportunity to support LBC but lack the confidence and skills to do so. Training in LBC methods should form part of the healthcare professional training curricula, however to date there has been no assessment of whether or where this occurs.

AIMS: To examine the content of core training competencies for general and dermatology-specialist healthcare professionals for evidence of skill development related to health promotion and LBC.

METHODS: Training documents from UK professional accrediting groups were content analysed to examine knowledge of LBC, behaviour change skills, and attitudes towards addressing LBC with patients in relation to healthcare professional role.

RESULTS: References to LBC appeared mostly in the General Practitioner curriculum (n=42), followed by the Dermatology Specialist Nurse curriculum (n=14) and Dermatologist curriculum (n=11). LBC knowledge, skills relating to conducting LBC with patients and attitudes towards conducting LBC were not well specified, with only basic competencies included in the curricula.

CONCLUSIONS: Unhealthy lifestyle behaviours are a health risk for psoriasis patients, however there is little on lifestyle behaviour change (LBC) in healthcare professionals’ core training competencies. Inclusion of evidence-based approaches to LBC in healthcare professionals’ core training competencies. Inclusion of evidence-based approaches to LBC in healthcare professionals’ core training competencies.