

Help design and disseminate research of outcomes in those with asthma or skin conditions

Share your ideas with a leading research group to help improve the physical and mental health of patients with asthma, eczema or psoriasis

The projects

We are conducting multiple studies investigating poor mental and physical health in people with allergic and skin conditions such as asthma, eczema and psoriasis. These conditions are common, so any links with other health conditions are important as it could affect a lot of people.

We use large databases of recorded patient visits with doctors to study these conditions. Previous work has shown links between skin conditions and obesity, lymphoma, broken bones, heart disease and mental health problems.

With these new projects we hope to understand more about which poor health outcomes are more common in people with asthma or skin conditions and why.

We are looking for contributions to two projects:

1. **Multimorbidity in eczema and asthma:** we will use information collected when people visit their doctors to investigate all recorded health outcomes in a group of people with skin conditions to a group without, and a group with asthma to a group without. This will allow us to assess which health conditions are more common in people with skin conditions and to start to understand why these problems occur together.
2. **Mental health problems in those with skin conditions:** we know that mental health problems are more common in people with skin conditions. Possible causes for this include social (e.g., stigma) or job-related factors, poor sleep quality (e.g., as a result of persistent itch in eczema), lifestyle factors (e.g., smoking or obesity) or inflammation related to having active skin conditions. However, little is known about the relative role of these different factors, which our research is addressing.

Through this research we will highlight the importance of identifying poor mental and physical health in people with asthma and skin conditions. Our results may offer opportunities for identifying factors driving poor mental and physical health in people with asthma and skin conditions, and therefore people who would particularly benefit from targeted screening and early intervention. Through this research we will aim to understand why people with asthma and skin conditions might have other health conditions. Understanding these reasons may help us to prevent health problems in the future.

Requirements

Our only requirement is experience with managing, or being a carer of, someone with asthma, eczema or psoriasis. Full training will be provided to help us interpret our findings and support will be available from established patient representatives in our projects.

Patient and Public Involvement

We want people with eczema and psoriasis to play an important role in the design and interpretation of our research. It will be important for us to gain knowledge on possible risk factors from those living with the conditions we are studying to make sure we answer the right questions. Patient involvement will also be critical when communicating our findings in an effective and accessible manner.

How will people be getting involved in our work?

We will present research design ideas and interim results at regular meetings and seek feedback and input from patient and public representatives.

Typical questions we want feedback on include:

- Are we missing anything?
- Are there other problems we should be focussing on?
- Are there other causes of these health outcomes we should include?

How will the involvement contribute to our work and what impact will it have?

Contributions will help us design our research and the questions that we ask. We also expect that you will be able to help us interpret our results and put them in context.

Contributions to our research will be recognised with authorship (if appropriate, consistent with ICMJE criteria) or acknowledgement on any journal articles that are published as a result of our work.

What is the time commitment of the involvement?

We are currently planning for 2 PPI meetings in early 2021 – one each in January and March. The meetings will last for one hour each. More time may be required to read materials in advance or feedback after these meetings. There will also be time for training and introduction to the projects.

This work can be done from home provided you have a computer/laptop or tablet and access to the internet. Research team meetings are held virtually (using Zoom) at the moment.

When will the involvement start?

January 2021 but recruitment will be rolling

Who else will be involved in the project?

A team of researchers at LSHTM. Collaborators at other UK universities. Current patient representatives.

Contact

If you are interested in getting involved with our project or have any questions, then please get in touch with Ali Henderson: (alasdair.henderson1 [at] lshtm.ac.uk)

And follow our work on twitter: @sineadlangan1 @AD_henderson1 @ehr_lshtm