

Identifying and managing psoriasis-associated comorbidities: the IMPACT research programme

Lis Cordingley,^{1*} Pauline A Nelson,² Linda Davies,³
Darren Ashcroft,⁴ Christine Bundy,²
Carolyn Chew-Graham,⁵ Anna Chisholm,²
Jamie Elvidge,³ Matthew Hamilton,³ Rachel Hilton,⁶
Karen Kane,² Christopher Keyworth,²
Alison Littlewood,² Karina Lovell,⁷ Mark Lunt,⁸
Helen McAteer,⁹ Dionysios Ntais,³ Rosa Parisi,⁴
Christina Pearce,² Martin Rutter,¹⁰
Deborah Symmons,⁸ Helen Young^{2,11}
and Christopher EM Griffiths^{2,11}

¹Division of Musculoskeletal and Dermatological Sciences, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

²Dermatology Research Centre, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

³Centre for Health Economics, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

⁴Centre for Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

⁵Primary Care and Health Sciences, Keele University, Keele, UK

⁶Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Wigan, UK

⁷School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

⁸Centre for Epidemiology Versus Arthritis, Centre for Musculoskeletal Research, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

⁹Psoriasis Association, Northampton, UK

¹⁰Manchester Diabetes Centre, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, Manchester, UK

¹¹Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, Salford, UK

*Corresponding author Lis.Cordingley@manchester.ac.uk

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Plain English summary

The IMPACT research programme

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Plain English summary

Psoriasis is a complex condition. It is a common, lifelong skin disease that is demanding to live with and can involve other health conditions such as anxiety, depression and psoriatic arthritis. People with psoriasis may have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease possibly owing to inflammation in the body, the effects of some psoriasis treatments, unhealthy behaviours or a combination of these.

During this research we talked to both patients and health-care staff about their experiences of receiving and delivering psoriasis care and observed what takes place in practice. We looked at how common psoriasis is and what other conditions are associated with it. We measured risk factors for cardiovascular disease and asked about preferred ways of receiving care.

We found that psoriasis affects about one person in 50 in the UK. We also found that having inflammatory arthritis and psoriasis together makes it very slightly more likely that someone will have a heart attack or stroke (but we did not find this to be true if someone has psoriasis alone). Large numbers of patients with psoriasis had unhealthy behaviours and higher risk factors for heart attack and stroke, and health professionals needed training in how to help patients manage this risk.

We developed new high-quality patient materials that helped people understand psoriasis better. We created new training for health-care staff that improved the support they could provide to people, enabling them to care for not just skin symptoms but the 'whole person'. Patients and health-care staff felt that the new materials and training could be valuable for use in current health-care services to improve psoriasis care; however, it is uncertain how the new materials and training would work in real-world situations and whether or not they are cost-effective. These issues need to be tested in clinical practice.

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