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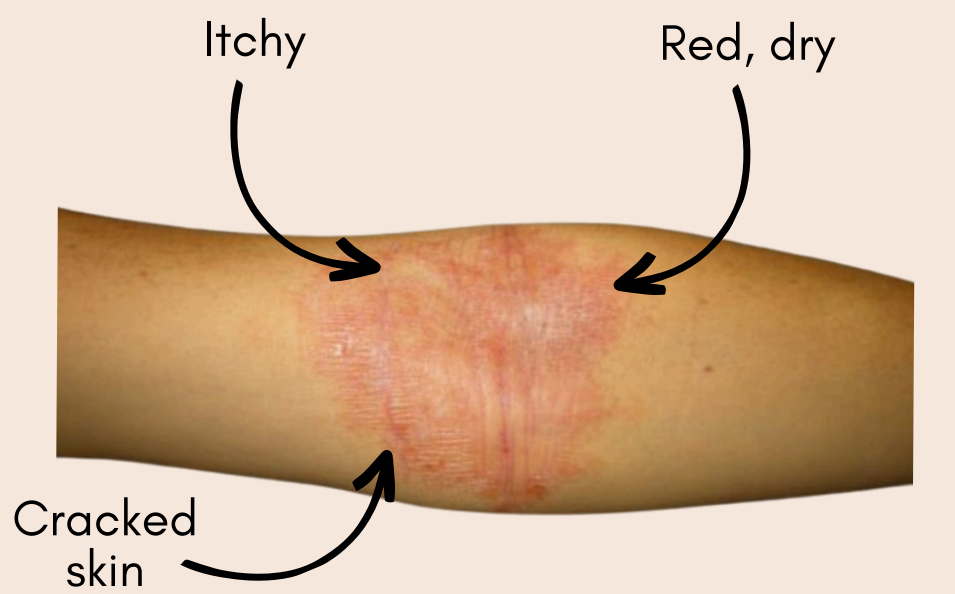
BRIDGING THE GAP: SKIN FOR ALL AND ITS IMPACT ON ADDRESSING RACIAL INEQUALITIES IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

- It is vital that the issue of ethnic minority representation is understood and campaigned for within the medical community. This will drive the movement towards proportionate representation in medical education. Thus, improving the recognition rates and risk perception of diseases in all skin tones within clinical settings.
- Skin For All aims to diversify medical education and improve patient/medical student knowledge by providing a comprehensive, representative and well-rounded resource when discussing skin conditions and their presentations on different skin tones.

CONTEXT

- According to NHS England's equality, diversity, and inclusion improvement plan, one of its biggest goals is to acknowledge the use of language which isolates certain groups and what barriers are present in patients that result in a reduction of clinical care quality and experience [1].
- There is a longstanding issue of underrepresentation in medical history, education, and research, particularly concerning ethnic minority patients. A 2018 study from the University of Washington found that the Atlas of Human Anatomy, a widely used learning tool, features less than 1% of images with dark skin [2].
- This misrepresentation has real-life consequences, with non-white patients facing higher mortality rates associated with dermatological diseases such as skin cancer despite being more prevalent in white populations [3]. Emphasising the impact of ethnic minority underrepresentation on clinical outcomes.



Description Source: NHS Inform [10]
Original Image: DermNetNZ [4]



Description Source: Skin For All [5]
Original Image: DermNetNZ [4]

AIMS

To encourage students to become familiar with inclusive language in clinical skin descriptors

To normalise diverse images/ language in medical curriculums

To raise awareness about racial disparities in medical education and clinical practice

To support non-medical personnel in recognising skin conditions on diverse skin tones



FEATURES: SKIN FOR ALL

SUMMARY

Can be used to gain a clear and accessible summary of these conditions before delving into the more detailed elements of disease profiles.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

Aimed at medical students who can use it in case studies, problem-based learning and understanding the general prevalence of conditions. They range in areas affected across the globe with studies and reports gained from organisations such as the WHO.

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

This has been split into two parts according to the level of medical knowledge the user holds. Medical jargon is defined for non-medical users and simplified sentences are written to improve accessibility to the website's content.

IMAGE INCLUSION

The images used were chosen to represent multiple skin tones and types. It also includes a variety of condition stages to understand how these conditions impact differently on a range of skin tones.

MYTHS

These are included to clear misinformation and support users as much as possible. This also allows the user to research further into conditions they are interested in with helpful and relevant links.

QUESTIONS

Based on conversations, the use of questions for each condition has proven useful for everyone. By providing a list of recommended questions, the consultations with doctors can also be less intimidating and more structured and informative to the patient/individual

SUPPORT

These links allow users to delve into further reading and support surrounding the conditions mentioned on the website.

- Questions you may want to ask your doctor
 - How can I treat discomfort from the infection?
 - Can it spread to others? How can I prevent that from happening?
 - How long will it take for treatment to work?
 - What can I do if the infection is impacting my self esteem?
 - How do I avoid getting an infection again in shared spaces?

Example of Questions included in Skin For All for patients

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DISCUSSION

- The importance of bottom-up student-led projects like Skin For All can help support the movement towards more representation and diversity in the medical school curriculum.
- Increasing awareness of diversity in medical education can be achieved differently according to the target demographic (medical students and patients)
- For medical students, methods of change include calling for more cases regarding ethnic minority patients to be integrated within seminars, lectures and problem-based learning (PBL) groups. As well as a call for the inclusion of images and recommended reading lists which will further enable the normalisation of diversity [14].
- For patients, raising awareness through public health groups, and media appearances can be effective in normalising diversity within the medical sphere.
- Further research is required to present the outcomes of Skin For All, however, its prominence in medical academia is growing with the use of cross-university presentations, broadcasts, and PBL integration.



Description from Skin For All: Papular (spots) rosacea found on the cheeks [5]
Image from DermNetNZ [4] used in Skin For All



Description from Skin For All: Rosacea with papules and pustules on the cheeks [5]
Image from DermNetNZ [4] used in Skin For All



Description from Skin For All: Close up image of stage 2 chickenpox [5]
Image from NHS.net [1] used in Skin For All



Description from Skin For All: Chickenpox blisters on the neck and upper chest [5]
Image from Mind The Gap [11] used in Skin For All

RESEARCH

I used 6 different sites to determine the most common conditions that affect patients. The sites used also cover the multiple, international populations that may use this website, so studies and reports from developing, and developed countries were chosen.

- Global Skin Disease Morbidity and Mortality: Update from the Global Burden of Disease [6]
- Epidemiology and Management of Common Skin Diseases in Children in Developing Countries [7]
- The Burden of Skin and Subcutaneous Diseases: Findings from the Global Burden of Disease Study [8]
- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases: Skin Diseases [9]
- Skin, hair and nails: NHS inform [10]
- Mind the Gap by BlackandBrownSkin [11]

Images were sourced from patient-focused websites including DermNetNZ [4], NHS [10] and Mind the Gap [11]

RESULTS

6.5K page visits over Jun- Dec 2023

Skin For All created in June 2023

Appearance in BBC Spotlight and LBC Radio in Oct 2023 [12]

Integration of Skin For All in the Exeter University Problem Based Learning curriculum recommended reading in October 2023

Presented Skin For All at the University of Osteopathy to students in Nov 2023

Presented Skin For All to Public Involvement in Medical Education group in Exeter in Nov 2023

Interview appearance in the BMA magazine, The Doctor in Nov 2023 [13]

650 page views in Jan 2024-present

Over 20 testimonials about Skin For All were received from Students, Staff, Doctors and Members of the public. Rated 5/5 stars by all reviewers [5].