

LOW PRIORITY

Eczema is the second most frequent reason for a new dermatological consultation in general practice (v). Studies suggest there may be a feeling amongst GPs that eczema is often accorded a low priority in primary care (v).

Young people suggested the following would help during interactions with their healthcare professionals: "[Healthcare professionals need] a better understanding of how severe eczema can affect our mental state e.g. feeling down and useless". (Young person with eczema).

"Most of the time I don't understand the dermatologist, but the written letter sent home explains the treatment plan in detail. This helps a lot". (Parent/carer of children with eczema).*

There is no current national guidance in England and Wales on the diagnosis, treatment and management of eczema in those aged over 12 years. This lack of guidance has an impact on the level of care that patients across the country receive. It means that consideration to the challenges faced by various age groups, including the difficult transition from paediatric to adult services, has not been given.

In Scotland, a national guideline (2011) recommends a similar approach in adults and children to managing atopic eczema (i).

Northern Ireland guidance advises that NICE's guidelines on under 12s can be used to manage eczema in older children and adults (ii).

More than 1 in 10 parents/carers had seen their GP 6-10 times in 2020 for their child's eczema, whilst nearly half had been to their GP 2-5 times. This suggests referral to a specialist may be necessary (iv).

RECEIVE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE CORE DERMATOLOGY TRAINING, REFLECTING THEIR HEAVY SKIN DISEASE CASELOAD.

PRIORITISE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & THEIR FAMILIES' SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS SO THEY CAN BETTER CONTROL THEIR ECZEMA AT HOME.

"I want to be involved in the conversation and not just talked at like I'm still a child needing to understand my treatment". (17 year-old with eczema).

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN UP TO DATE NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ATOPIC ECZEMA IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO HELP ADDRESS HEALTH INEQUALITIES.

Evidence shows that local commissioning guidance on eczema is very limited (iii).

"I often feel judged and ashamed to go to the doctors, because I feel like it's probably flared up because of something I have done wrong". (17 year old with eczema).

PUT YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF THEIR OWN ECZEMA CARE.

PRIMARY CARE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS SHOULD...

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH & CARE EXCELLENCE (NICE) & SCOTTISH INTERCOLLEGIATE GUIDELINES NETWORK (SIGN) SHOULD...

"He is 17 and is hugely struggling with the impact of significant flare-ups and a management plan that works. He definitely would benefit from support but nothing is offered nor is available locally". (Patient/carer of young person aged 17 with eczema).

Young people suggested the following would help during interactions with their healthcare professionals: "If they speak to me directly or don't act as if I'm not present when talking to my parent".

"My doctor is dismissive and doesn't listen/care much about [my eczema]". (17 year old with eczema).

eczema

irritable, skin, pandemic, worse, scratching, flare ups, understanding, self-conscious, school, mental health, upset, worried, apply cream, awareness, uncomfortable, feel helpless, need support, confidence, constant hand washing, embarrassed, flare ups, school uniform, stress, disturbed sleep, concentrate, GP unable, mental health, worried, irritability, skin, pandemic, worse, scratching, flare ups, understanding, self-conscious, school, mental health, upset, worried, apply cream, awareness, uncomfortable, feel helpless, need support, confidence, constant hand washing, embarrassed, flare ups, school uniform, stress, disturbed sleep, concentrate, GP unable, mental health, worried.

THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES.

RECOGNISE THE VALUE OF THE THIRD SECTOR IN MEETING THE UNMET PRACTICAL & EMOTIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS OF FAMILIES WITH ECZEMA BY PROVIDING FUNDING & WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP.

"Until we found the EOS group, [my child] had little support and if we'd met the group earlier, it would've been helpful". (Parent/carer of a child with eczema over 5-years of age).

"I wish that the school educated other students about [eczema], because I feel like it's awkward having to explain to teachers why I need to apply cream in the middle of a lesson, or if a classmate asks". (14 year old with eczema).

DELIVER ECZEMA AWARENESS WORKSHOPS & TRAINING FOR TEACHERS & PUPILS & SHARE BEST PRACTICE WITHIN THEIR NETWORKS.

SCHOOLS & LOCAL AUTHORITIES SHOULD...

INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEMS (CROSS-STATUTORY SERVICES BODIES) SHOULD...

BE EQUIPPED WITH & USE SPECIALIST RESOURCES ON PRACTICAL WAYS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ECZEMA DURING SCHOOL HOURS.

MEET THE TARGET WAITING TIMES FROM REFERRAL TO TREATMENT FOR DERMATOLOGY SERVICES.

INCREASE THE PROVISION & IMPROVE ACCESS TO PSYCHO-DERMATOLOGY PROVISION ACROSS THE UK BASED ON A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH.

"I wish there was some support available for both parent and child as it is so stressful and overwhelming". (Parent/carer of children with eczema over 5-years of age).

About
This document highlights the findings from a survey run by the national charity, Eczema Outreach Support (EOS). Between December 2020 and February 2021, EOS surveyed children and young people (11-17 years) with eczema and parents/carers of children aged 0-17 years with eczema to find out about the true impact eczema has on their lives and how they are supported to manage it. A report providing more details is available here: <https://www.eos.org.uk/why-we-exist/publications/>
The Time for Change Report gives more detail to the findings of the survey, together with a series of recommendations for primary healthcare professionals to better care for and support families affected by eczema in the UK. Financial support for the EOS survey was provided by Sanofi Genzyme, who had no editorial control over the content or results. The subsequent report and this infographic has been produced and funded by Sanofi Genzyme in collaboration with Eczema Outreach Support.

"I have not been able to write, eat, wash my hands or participate in science experiments a few times and the teachers have never been very understanding". (16 year old with eczema).

"It was so difficult to get a referral to a dermatologist even though my eczema was very severe. When I did, the appointments were not regular, it would be once every 6 months. This was not helpful at all". (17 year old with eczema).