



The All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin

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Meeting of the APPGS, Wednesday 16th November

The Standards

- On Wednesday 16th November, the APPGS held a reception at the House of Commons to mark the parliamentary launch of the dermatology standards
- A range of organisations and commissioners were involved in the development of the standards, which have been endorsed by the British Association of Dermatologists (BAD), the British Dermatological Nursing Group (BDNG), the National Eczema Society (NES), the Psoriasis Association, the Primary Care Dermatological Society (PCDS), the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) and the Skin Care Campaign (SCC).
- The standards were developed as a precursor to, as well as to help inform, future NICE quality standards.
- They are intended for use in any service that provides care or treatment for people with skin conditions. They bring together best practice and existing guidance, and aim to assist commissioners of services in a changing NHS.

Rationale

- Each year 24% of the population visit their local GP with a skin problem.
- Despite accounting for nearly a quarter of all GP appointments, knowledge of skin conditions in the medical community is severely lacking.
- Dermatology does not feature heavily in undergraduate or postgraduate medical training (in some cases less than five days). This means there is very little incentive to pursue dermatology at a later stage.
- Community pharmacists - who play an ever-increasing role in primary care and are often the first point of contact with patients - are not required to study dermatology as part of their undergraduate training course unless undertaken as a voluntary module.
- Nurses have the opportunity to study skin disease management after they qualify, however, such courses are not standardised and there is no recognised set of competences to work towards.
- The APPGS accepts that there are many GPs, nurses and pharmacists out there with extensive knowledge of skin conditions. However, in the interest of ensuring an equitable service across the NHS, the Group would like to promote these standards of care as best it can.