

# **Multidisciplinary Skin Health Clinic Background**

## **Background**

Psychodermatological conditions are highly prevalent in dermatology practice. It is estimated that every third patient in a dermatology clinic may have psychological distress [1]. In addition to high frequency, healthcare delivery in psychodermatology can be difficult and unsatisfying for practitioners, as well as patients and their families. Several studies reported challenges that limit providing optimal care to patients with psychodermatological conditions. These include physicians' under-recognition of psychodermatological disorders, patients' poor insight into these conditions, and lack of specialized clinics to treat these disorders [2-4]. In addition, dermatologists' lack of confidence to initiate psychotropic therapy can be a barrier to successfully treating psychodermatology patients [2, 4]. A US-based survey of dermatologists found that only 3% of respondents reported they had confidence in prescribing these medications [5]. The high demand on psychodermatological services, the challenges hindering optimal care and the shortage in available resources emphasize the pressing need for a multidisciplinary approach with dermatologists and psychiatrists working together to provide high quality medical care [4].

In Canada, psychodermatology practice is limited with no specialized clinic in Alberta. As a quality improvement project, we investigated the status of psychodermatology in Canada and identified several gaps. Consequently, we established a multidisciplinary Skin Health clinic with Dermatology in collaboration with Psychiatry aiming to narrow some of the gaps such as accessibility to psychiatry, referral system complications, and lack of training opportunities.

## References

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