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SKIN CANCER

INTRODUCTION

The number of patients with skin cancer has increased in recent years and is likely to rise further. In Scotland, cutaneous melanoma (previously referred to as malignant melanoma) is the fifth most common cancer in women and sixth in men. Incidence of melanoma has increased in the last ten years by 38% in men and 22% in women.¹ In 2014 there were 1,252 cases in Scotland and 2,459 melanoma deaths in the UK.² In 2010, the 10-year survival was 90%. 1 in 54 people will be diagnosed with melanoma in their lifetime.²

It is common for patients to ask clinicians just to have a quick look at a mole, often as an add on at the end of a consultation. As the incidence of skin cancer (of all forms) is increasing, the challenge for primary care clinicians is to correctly identify and refer all lesions which are skin cancer, but not overload dermatology clinics with benign lesions.

The module aims are:

- Diagnosis and initial management of skin cancers
- Review current treatments, prognostic factors and follow-up
- Summarise pre-cancerous lesions and benign lesions which may mimic skin cancer
- Discuss preventative measures

Please note that skin cancer diagnosis is largely pattern recognition - beware the new ugly duckling (a new or changed lesion that looks out of place in comparison with existing lesions). To this end we feel that a large number of images is necessary in this module and we will signpost you to online images. These links will appear in blue within the module (or underlined if you are viewing in a black and white paper format). To gain most from this module you will need to ensure internet access and either a large screen for your group to look at together, or multiple small screens (such as tablets) whilst you study the module with your group. The information section with relevant photographs and links will follow each case to make navigation easier, and a list of all the image links is included before any of the cases. Appendix 4 has a list of all image links for ease when studying the module.