

Dermabuddy — The dermatology app that is making a difference for GPs and their patients

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Dear Editor,

Access to Dermatology care for patients can be challenging, particularly if a patient is from a lower socio-economic class or living in deprivation¹. General practitioners are familiar and comfortable with mobile health apps and use them for a variety of functions and research suggests that whilst Dermatology consultations are common in primary care, it is an area practice where GPs may feel under skilled^{2,3}.

I am writing to you to highlight the following cross-sectional study conducted in an Irish setting (2021) which reviews GPs attitudes and experiences to using an active and contemporary mHealth resource in the Irish healthcare setting⁴. The app reviewed is the *Dermabuddy* health app which is a free, secure mobile health app by which information and expertise around skin problems can be shared among a group of medical professionals with the aim of finding the best treatment and management plan. This study was recently published in BJGP Open.

GPs who are members of the *Dermabuddy* app were surveyed using the online platform SurveyMonkey and questions covered a range of domains including ease of use and satisfaction, system information arrangement and usefulness. There was also a free text box for participants to leave comments or feedback on the app. The response rate was 13.5% (203/1503). Ninety-six per cent who responded to the statement, '*The app was easy to use*', agreed it was 'easy' or 'very easy'. Eighty-seven per cent of those who responded to the statement, '*I would use this app again*', agreed they 'definitely would'. Fifty-eight per cent of those who responded to the statement, '*The app is useful for my healthcare practice*', gave it a five-star rating.⁽⁴⁾ Positive feedback in the free text section included one comment "*This app has directly improved the care of over 20 of my patients who do not have private health insurance who would be waiting years to see dermatology as a public patients*".

The digital health space is growing and with the rise in population, ageing and the increased demand for healthcare utilisation (including dermatology care) this study provides an update

on a novel resource which is providing an alternative solution to managing patients with dermatological conditions⁵. The highlighted study shows this app is acceptable, desirable and beneficial for GPs in Ireland.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest:

None declared.

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