



HUMANITARIAN DERMATOLOGY/MIGRANT HEALTH

DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES MANUAL FOR SKIN CANCER DIAGNOSES, TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT IN ALBINISM FOR COMMUNITY CLINICIANS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.

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Introduction: Albinism affects up to 1 in 1000 individuals in some sub-Saharan African communities. Skin cancer is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in albinism in Africa, commonly resulting in advanced squamous cell carcinoma by the 4th decade of life. Community-based clinicians working in regions with limited access to major referral centres are best placed to improve outcomes for these patients but lack the diagnostic and dermatological surgical skills to achieve this.

Objective: The International Foundation for Dermatology and Standing Voice, an NGO running a comprehensive program of skin care for people with albinism in sub-Saharan Africa, collaborated with community-based clinicians to develop a manual to improve management of skin cancer in albinism in low-resource regions.

Materials and Methods: The educational needs of community dermatologists were identified by interactive practical workshops, questionnaires and by observation in clinics and operative sessions. The manual was developed in participation with community dermatologists to meet their educational needs within the resource constraints of remote regional health systems. The effectiveness of the manual was assessed by observation, interview and questionnaire.

Results: A Manual of Best Practice in managing skin cancer in albinism was completed in collaboration with community dermatologists and was shown to be effective in improving their confidence in skin cancer recognition and management. It has been published for distribution throughout sub-Saharan Africa. An online version and a francophone Africa version is also under development.

Conclusions: The participation of community clinicians in sub-Saharan Africa has resulted in the publication of a manual for skin cancer management in albinism which is relevant to their educational needs and their resource-limited health care environment to aid a





reduction in mortality and morbidity in a marginalised and at-risk population.

