Skin Cancer in Northern Ireland

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Outline
- Skin cancer facts
- Causes of skin cancer
- Treatment
- Prevention
- Northern Ireland Melanoma strategy
- Future challenges

Malignant Melanoma
- 280 cases in NI in last year
- Potentially fatal disease particularly if late diagnosis
- Most common cancer in 25-49yr olds
- Early diagnosis is key
European Melanoma incidence

All Ireland melanoma experience

BCC

Most common form of skin cancer
Increasing incidence with ageing population
Rarely fatal
Huge burden on Health service

Squamous cell carcinoma

22% of skin cancers in NI
Potentially fatal if diagnosed late
Disease of outdoor workers and farmers
Causes of skin cancer

- UVB is main cause of skin cancer
- Age of and degree of exposure key
- Genetic fair skin and cancer susceptibility

the factors involved in skin cancer

Sunny holidays accessible and desirable

Sunbed use in children and young adults

Using sunbeds for the first time before the age of 15 increases the risk of developing melanoma skin cancer by 75%.
Treatment of skin cancer

Early diagnosis is key

Surgery by Dermatologists and Plastic surgeons is largely curative in early cases

Pathways of melanoma patients

Care of Patients with Malignant Melanoma of Skin in Northern Ireland, 2006 NICR

Complex skin cancers

- Dealt with by local and regional Multidisciplinary Team meetings attended by
  - Dermatology
  - Plastic Surgery
  - Pathology
  - Oncology
  - Radiologists

Establishment of such teams has been challenging due to lack of resources

Prevention of skin cancer

Primary prevention is most cost effective

First strategy document 1997- establishment of Northern Ireland Melanoma Strategy Implementation Group (NIMSIG) facilitated by UCF
Successes of strategy

Targeting populations at risk

Successful campaigns
The new strategy objectives and targets

- Increase public awareness regarding the dangers of overexposure to UV radiation from sunlight and from artificial tanning devices
- Increase awareness about the early signs of skin cancer and the need for prompt attention
- Increase individual and organisation wide practice of sun safety behaviours
- To increase the proportion of the population who check their skin for signs of cancer once a month or more.

Sunbed group of NIMSIG

- On Council premises
  - BCC - Jan. 03 - 35 / Jan. 04 - 0
  - N.I. - Sept. 03 - 8 / Dec 04 - 0
  - Civic leadership
- Private solarium
  - surveys
  - HSE guidance
  - Safety Pays

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SUNBEDS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2011

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED REGULATIONS

- SUNBEDS (INFORMATION) REGULATIONS
- SUNBEDS (FIXED PENALTY) REGULATIONS
Future challenges

- Continued increase incidence of skin cancer
- Meagre resources to implement new skin cancer strategy
- Shortfall in clinicians to deal with skin cancer epidemic and maintain access targets for non-cancer patients
- Funding of new complex drugs that are emerging particularly for Melanoma

Future challenges

- Northern Ireland Cancer Network – melanoma and skin cancer tumour network has been suspended

Thank you for listening