

**Steve Barclay MP**  
**Secretary of State for Health and Social Care**  
Ministerial Correspondence and Public Enquiries Unit  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU  
United Kingdom

15<sup>th</sup> of September 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

### **PATIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH TO CARE FOR ATOPIC ECZEMA**

In the spirit of putting our patients in the UK front and centre, we are writing to request that the Department of Health and Social Care takes urgent steps to co-create & support a more patient-centric approach to care for the 1 in 5 children and 1 in 10 adults in the UK who are living with eczema,<sup>1</sup> and in particular those who are living with its most common form, atopic eczema (otherwise known as atopic dermatitis).<sup>2</sup>

Currently, people living with eczema receive varying standards of care from diagnosis to treatment based on where they live. There are some excellent examples of Integrated Care Systems offering services like psychodermatology alongside medical treatment but, in other areas of the country, patients are missing out.<sup>3</sup> We must ensure that best practice in dermatology becomes common practice.

To set out our shared vision of what constitutes best practice for eczema patients, Sanofi co-developed and funded a Patient Charter for people living with atopic eczema – *Let's Put Skin in the Game* – which calls for healthcare providers to:

- Ensure access to specialist and psychodermatology care is improved and made more consistent across England;
- Increase opportunities for patient-initiated follow-up during symptom flare-ups;
- Support people living with atopic eczema to better manage their condition and mental health, and support them to be genuine partners in their own care;
- Improve education around both physical and mental health provision.

Implementation of this charter across all Integrated Care Systems will ensure that patients across the country get the support they need to manage their condition. And there is significant room for improvement. Atopic eczema causes major strain on patients' physical health, but the impacts are far more wide-reaching than this. Eczema affects the financial,<sup>4</sup> social,<sup>5</sup> and psychological<sup>6</sup> aspects of patients' lives

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and creates a knock-on effect for society more broadly. Half of those living with eczema reported having to take time off work due to their condition.<sup>7</sup> Eczema cost the NHS £179.09 million in 2020 on GP appointments, and £71.76 million on referrals in the same period.<sup>8</sup> We know the cost to the economy through loss of productivity for a patient with moderate to severe eczema is estimated to be between £6,741 and £14,166 per year.<sup>8</sup>

The government can make a meaningful difference in patients' lives by fully resourcing Integrated Care Systems to enact the recommendations in our Patient Charter, ensuring that the Charter is common practice across the country. The government has an opportunity to build on those examples of Integrated Care Systems which are already providing a gold-standard of care, guaranteeing the best possible standard care across the country.

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how the patient community, together with industry, can collectively work towards improved outcomes and a more patient-centric approach to care for people living with atopic eczema.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



**Andrew Proctor, Chief Executive Officer, National Eczema Society**



**Suzi Holland, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Eczema Outreach Support**



**Matthew Patey OBE, Chief Executive Officer, British Skin Foundation**



**Simone Miles, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Allergy UK**



**Rippon Ubhi, General Manager, Sanofi Specialty Care UK & Ireland**

## About Sanofi

*We are an innovative global healthcare company, driven by one purpose: we chase the miracles of science to improve people's lives. Our team, across some 100 countries, is dedicated to transforming the practice of medicine by working to turn the impossible into the possible. We provide potentially life-changing treatment options and potentially life-saving vaccine protection to millions of people globally, while putting sustainability and social responsibility at the centre of our ambitions.*

## References

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