



## PSORIASIS Uncovered

New research shows that psoriasis has a dramatic and lasting impact on people's lives, potentially affecting their ability to pursue careers, educational opportunities and relationships<sup>1</sup>.

325 Irish responses were collected among over 10,800 responses from 17 countries<sup>1</sup>.

As part of the commitment to support psoriasis patients, the Psoriasis Association of Ireland in collaboration with Abbott Laboratories launched a national campaign to raise awareness and increase understanding of psoriasis - **Psoriasis Uncovered**.

People with psoriasis in Ireland and across the world were invited to complete an anonymous online survey at [www.psoriasisuncovered.ie](http://www.psoriasisuncovered.ie) resulting in a total of over 10,800 responses from 17 countries around the world, including 325 Irish responses<sup>1</sup>.

*“These results highlight the huge impact that psoriasis, perceived by many to be a simple skin complaint, can have on a person’s quality of life. For the 100,000 people who have psoriasis in Ireland, there is often a stigma attached to the condition which impacts on many facets of daily life. We hope that this research will go some way to uncovering the often hidden impact of psoriasis and that by understanding the social and psychological effects of psoriasis in Ireland and around the world, we can begin to address them”*

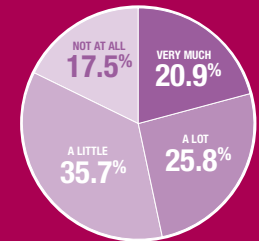
Caroline Irwin, Chairperson, Psoriasis Association of Ireland



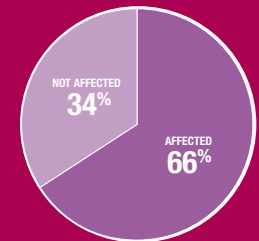
## QUALITY OF LIFE

### The survey captured information about the social and psychological effects of psoriasis

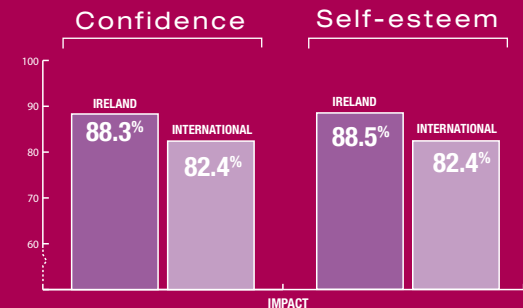
Over the last week 82.5% of Irish responders had been embarrassed or self conscious because of their skin<sup>1</sup>



For 66% of Irish responders psoriasis has affected their social life and relationships<sup>1</sup>



Up to 88.5% feel psoriasis has impacted on their confidence and self-esteem, the corresponding International results are 82.4%<sup>1</sup>



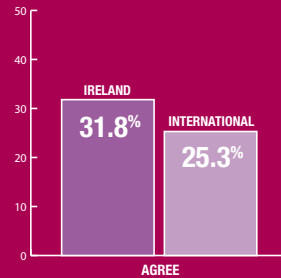
85.8% of Irish respondents felt that their psoriasis impacted on their enjoyment of life compared to 81.8% of International responders<sup>1</sup>



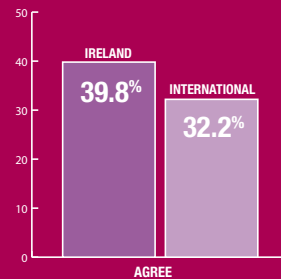
## CAREER

A further objective of the survey was to better understand how a person's career may be affected by psoriasis

Almost one third of respondents believed that their condition prevented them from pursuing their desired career path or field<sup>1</sup>



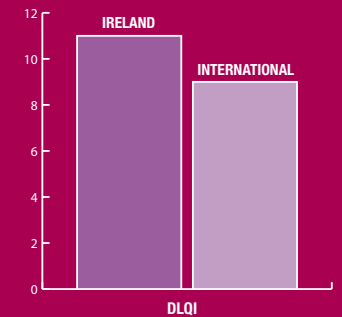
Nearly 40% reported that psoriasis affected their behaviour at work<sup>1</sup>



## DLQI

Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI) is one of the most widely used dermatology-specific quality of life instruments, helping doctors understand how much their patients' skin problems can affect their quality of life. The DLQI has overall score ranges of 0-30, the higher the score, the more quality of life is impaired.

An average DLQI score of 11 was reported by those that participated in the research in Ireland which correlates to the condition as having a very large effect on a patient's life<sup>1</sup>. This compared with an average DLQI score of 9 across all the participants worldwide, which correlates to a moderate effect on a patient's life<sup>1</sup>.



### Meaning of DLQI Scores

- 0-1 = no effect at all on patient's life
- 2-5 = small effect on patient's life
- 6-10 = moderate effect on patient's life
- 11-20 = very large effect on patient's life
- 21-30 = extremely large effect on patient's life

*"Reflecting these research findings, I, too, often see the serious impact psoriasis can have on the quality of life of my patients, particularly those living with moderate to severe psoriasis. Newer treatment options are now available which can make significant improvements in the condition long-term with positive benefits on overall quality of life. Early diagnosis and treatment is critical in ensuring optimum results and I would therefore encourage anyone with psoriasis to seek an appointment with a dermatologist to discuss their options."*

Professor Sarah Rogers,  
Department of Dermatology, St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin

## WHAT IS PSORIASIS?

Psoriasis is a chronic, non-contagious auto-immune disease. It commonly causes red, scaly patches to appear on the skin. The scaly patches caused by psoriasis, called psoriatic plaques, are areas of inflammation and excessive skin production.<sup>2</sup>

Simply put, psoriasis is an acceleration of the skin's normal replacement processes. New and old skin cells rapidly accumulate at these sites and take on a silvery-white appearance, called plaques. Plaques frequently occur on the skin of the elbows and knees, but can affect any area including the scalp.<sup>2</sup>

Psoriasis affects an estimated 100,000 people in Ireland<sup>2</sup>. Though psoriasis occurs in people of all ages, it typically appears for the first time in people between the ages of 15 and 35<sup>2</sup>.

The severity of the disease varies from person to person. Psoriasis was previously thought to affect primarily the skin, however, the incidence of cardiovascular disease markers, including obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol is increased in psoriasis patients<sup>2</sup>.

Psoriasis is more than painful skin lesions; it can also potentially affect many aspects of a person's life, from professional and social activities to personal relationships. This may lead to emotional reactions such as anxiety, anger, embarrassment and depression<sup>2</sup>.

## TREATMENT

The first step on the road to treatment is to see a doctor who can diagnose and manage psoriasis. Though there is no known cure, there are many treatments that can reduce symptoms of the disease. The approach to psoriasis treatment management depends on the type, location and severity of the condition, as well as the age and medical history of the patient. Together, you and your doctor can find a treatment that works for you.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

**It's up to you to take responsibility for your condition by learning all you can and making the most of your doctor's visits. Remember, your relationship with your doctor is an ongoing partnership and good communication makes all the difference. Here are some tips:**

**Make a list of questions** to discuss with your doctor and bring it along to the visit.

**Keep a diary** that tracks symptoms and effectiveness of treatment. Bring this diary to the visit so that you can refer to it as needed.

**Acknowledge your feelings** – It's natural to experience sadness, anger and frustration when dealing with psoriasis.

**Don't give up** – Psoriasis is chronic and can be unpredictable; however it can be managed.

**Seek support** – You may want to enlist encouragement from family members, friends, co-workers or patient groups.

**Change the way you live** – One of the most important changes you can make when living with a disease like psoriasis is taking good care of your skin. Try to make time for a skin routine that includes daily moisturising with a suitable emollient/moisturiser.

**Take your medication** - To do well and to feel well you need to continue your treatment as prescribed by your doctor and not to stop taking care of your skin just because it has cleared up.

**Stay informed** - Read, talk to people, surf the Internet and discuss any questions you have about your condition and your treatment with your doctor.

## TOPICS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR

- Perceptions of your condition
- Effectiveness of current treatment
- Treatment side effects
- Questions about additional treatment options, including benefits and risks of therapies
- Treatments which best suit your lifestyle
- Lifestyle habits that may affect psoriasis (e.g. stress, smoking etc.)
- Emotional well being
- Support resources
- What to expect until next visit

## GETTING SUPPORT

### **Psoriasis Association of Ireland**

PO Box 4233, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin

Tel: +353 (0)87 645 87 16 (weekdays between the hours of 3pm-6pm)

e-mail: psoriasis.office@gmail.com

Website: www.psoriasisireland.ie



Psoriasis  
Association of  
Ireland

For further information on psoriasis, please visit

[www.psoriasisuncovered.ie](http://www.psoriasisuncovered.ie)

Developed by Abbott, a global healthcare company focused on the discovery and development of innovative treatments for immunologic diseases.

### **REFERENCES:**

1. Survey results from [www.psoriasisuncovered.ie](http://www.psoriasisuncovered.ie)
2. [www.psoriasisuncovered.ie](http://www.psoriasisuncovered.ie)