

# Assessing confidence of IAD members in caring for patients with skin of colour

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## BACKGROUND

Dermatology was established as a medical speciality in 18<sup>th</sup> century Western Europe, creating a publication bias towards dermatoses in lighter skin tones. According to the 2016 Irish census, 7% of the Irish population have skin of colour (SOC).<sup>1</sup> Despite growing awareness of racial equity in medicine,<sup>2</sup> little is known about Irish dermatologists' confidence in managing patients with SOC.

## METHODS

An online survey was distributed to members of the Irish Association of Dermatology (IAD) by email. Questions related to demographic details, exposure to SOC, and confidence with SOC.

## RESPONDENTS

53 members of the IAD responded to the survey, equating to a response rate of 37.9% (53/140). Most respondents were female (86.8%) and white (98.1%). Registrars made up 54.7%, and consultants 43.4%, of respondents.

		n(%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	7 (13.2%)
	Female	46 (86.8%)
<b>Age</b>	<30 years	10 (18.9%)
	30-45 years	27 (50.9%)
	46-65 years	16 (30.2%)
<b>Ethnicity</b>	White Irish/British/Euro	52 (98.1%)
	Other*	1 (1.9%)
<b>Grade</b>	Consultant	23 (43.4%)
	Registrar/SpR	29 (54.7%)
	Senior House Officer	1 (1.9%)
<b>Current country of work</b>	Republic of Ireland	46 (86.8%)
	Northern Ireland	5 (9.4%)
	England (outside London)	2 (3.8%)
<b>Dermatology training sites</b>	Republic of Ireland	40 (75.5%)
	Northern Ireland	7 (13.2%)
	England (London)	3 (5.7%)
	England (outside London)	7 (13.2%)
	USA	2 (3.8%)
<b>Estimated patients with SOC in clinic</b>	Australia	1 (1.9%)
	<5%	36 (67.9%)
	5-10%	13 (24.5%)
	10-20%	4 (7.5%)

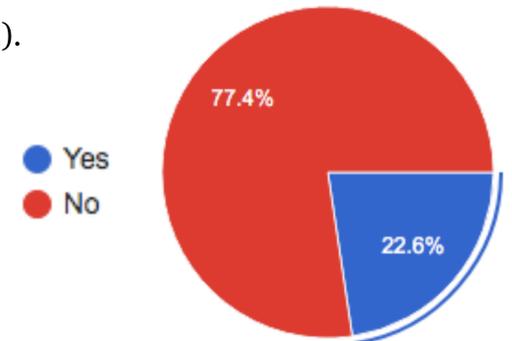
Table 1. Respondent characteristics.

\*Not specified for confidentiality reasons

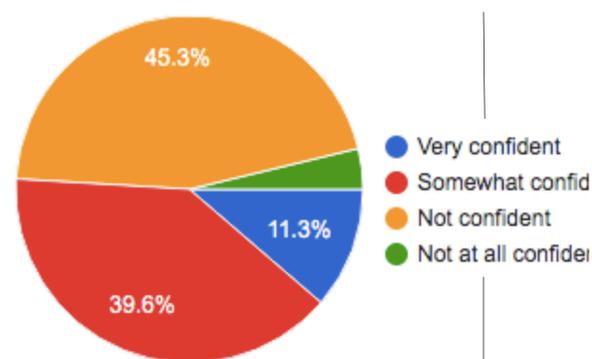
## RESULTS

Only 22.6% of members reported receiving formal training in dermatology in SOC (Figure 1).

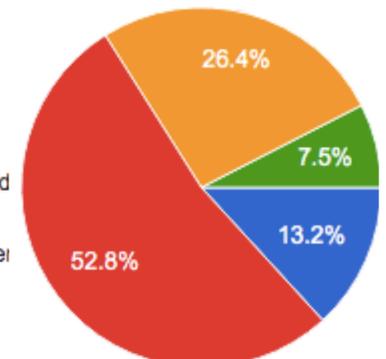
**Figure 1.** Have you ever received formal training in dermatology in skin of colour? n=53



Half (49.1%) of members were 'not confident' or 'not at all confident' in diagnosing skin conditions (Figure 2) and 33.9% were 'not confident' or 'not at all confident' in managing skin conditions (Figure 3) in patients with SOC.



**Figure 2.** How would you rate your confidence in DIAGNOSING skin conditions in patients with skin of colour? n=53



**Figure 3.** How would you rate your confidence in MANAGING skin conditions in patients with skin of colour? n=53

64.2% felt that the biggest challenge to looking after patients with SOC was lack of exposure to patients with SOC, which was unsurprising given that 67.9% of respondents estimated that <5% of patients in their clinics had SOC.

Key conditions which were noted to be difficult to diagnose or manage included inflammatory dermatoses (n=29) such as atopic dermatitis and lupus, pigmentary disorders (n=16) such as melanocytic naevi and vitiligo, and keloid scarring (n=4).

Suggested solutions to improving knowledge included study days, online resources, cultural training, and dedicated teaching clinics.

## CONCLUSION

Irish dermatologists have low confidence with skin pathology in SOC, and specific training could reduce this disparity.

## REFERENCES

- <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8e/> (Accessed 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021)
- Smith RJ, Oliver BU. Advocating for Black Lives—A Call to Dermatologists to Dismantle Institutionalized Racism and Address Racial Health Inequities. *JAMA Dermatol.* 2021;157(2):155–156. doi:10.1001/jamadermatol.2020.4392