Millions of people all over the world are being stigmatized and discriminated against because of their disease – it is time to take action and put psoriasis on the agenda now!

Psoriasis can be a truly devastating disease, as it not only affects your health but can also have a severe impact on how you live your life. Many people with psoriasis experience social stigmatization and discrimination on a more or less daily basis, in a wide range of settings; at school, at work, at the gym, in public bath houses. In some countries people with psoriasis suffer even more deeply, as they are ostracized, humiliated or even shut out from society when their disease is confused with HIV/AIDS, syphilis or even leprosy. The misconception that psoriasis is an infectious disease, or that a person who has psoriasis isn’t hygienic, is what commonly leads to this isolating behaviour.

A vicious cycle
Knowing this it isn’t difficult to understand that stigmatization and discrimination can lead to a vicious cycle of lower education, lower income, and sub-optimal living conditions and health care. Receiving sub-standard health care can lead to even larger health problems and complications, which might result in loss of income and even, in some severe cases, life. A lack of understanding and awareness among the public, but also in the health care system and among the ranks of public officials makes it necessary to take action on many levels. Policy makers and community leaders must be made aware of the problems of stigmatization and discrimination; health care providers have to consider all aspects of psoriasis and take a gathered approach on this multi-faceted disease, and the general public needs to be informed about the facts. Change must come both from the community, and the individual.

The IFPA Stigmatization and Discrimination Survey
IFPA has asked its 44 member associations to conduct a survey on stigmatization and discrimination in their countries, to highlight where the main problem areas are, and what can be done about them. Preliminary results show, for example, that social stigmatization is a major problem for many young people in school, and that they refrain from taking part in many activities as a result, or are even discouraged to participate. Action needs to be taken so that these young people, and others, do not suffer needlessly because of myths and misconceptions regarding their disease. Results of the survey will be presented at the 3rd World Psoriasis & Psoriatic Arthritis Conference in Stockholm in June 2012.

World Psoriasis Day
World Psoriasis Day, October 29, is an international event to raise awareness of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. With activities on all inhabited continents, it sets out to give people with psoriasis a global voice so that they will be heard and, hopefully, also understood, by health authorities, policy makers and the public. Please visit www.worldpsoriasisday.com to learn more.

IFPA
The International Federation of Psoriasis Associations, IFPA, is a non-profit organization made up of psoriasis associations around the world, representing the more than 125 million people who suffer from psoriatic disease. For more information on IFPA, please visit www.ifpa-pso.org, or contact us at ifpa@pso.se or +46 8 556 109 14.
ARGENTINA

Urban Actions:

We developed the WPD urban actions in 5 cities of Argentina: Santa Fe, Tucumán, Córdoba, Mar del Plata y Ciudad de Buenos Aires with the help and cooperation of our volunteering teams. Please find special pictures of the meeting in:

http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150438722294974.418092.103448854973
http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150438722294974.418092.103448854973&type=3

That day, the 29th of October we reached to more than 2000 signatures in all the country; besides the urban actions we developed our on line campaign and reached to 5600 signatures till now. The main aim of the campaign is to bring all that signatures to the Health Authorities in order to recognize the Psoriasis and Arthritic Psoriasis as a chronic disease.

On line actions/social Media:

Please find out the "speech bubble" on line support campaign in: www.aepso.org/hablemos

More than 250 people had upload its pictures with the speech bubble and the messages for not discrimination: psoriasis doesn't transmit, hug me I'm not contagious, or psoriasis won't tear us apart, etc.

All the messages were shared at facebook, twitter and youtube.

AEPSO at Mass Media:

We developed TV and radio spots for the campaign with two famous stars, Diego Torres (singer) and Enzo Francescoli (footballer). Please see the spots in:

Spot TV Diego Torres:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUAT6aG61_E
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUAT6aG61_E

Spot TV Enzo Francescoli:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSdgowyyqylM
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSdgowyyqylM

Workshops:

We developed 5 patient's workshops in different cities as: Rosario, Tandil, Santiago del Estero and Ciudad de Buenos Aires with more than 200 people of audience.

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Executive Director AEPSO
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WORLD PSORIASIS DAY IN CHINA

LEO Embraces World Psoriasis Day in China 2011

On October 29, China, World Psoriasis Day, LEO Pharma China jointly held a grand press conference with CDA (China Dermatologist Association) and Danish Embassy in Beijing. Participants including: Ministry of Health official, Danish ambassador, Dermatologists, patient representatives and more than 20 journalists.

Opposite photo: Press conference & award ceremony in Danish Embassy, Beijing

In order to raise public awareness of psoriasis and promote World Psoriasis Day further, LEO Pharma China also launched “Meet Experts” project in 10 cities together with local dermatologist associations Nov. 28 -30, 2011. Free lectures and consultations were offered by over 60 professionals to more than 2,000 psoriasis patients. Positive feedbacks were collected from both professionals and patients.

Photo below: Zhengzhou City, Ningbo and Shanghai

By launch of World Psoriasis Campaign and involving more healthcare decision makers, dermatologists, patients and media, we aim to guide more and more psoriasis patients to proper therapies, in the meantime, create a fair and caring environment for patients.

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Second Affiliated Hospital,
Zhejiang University, School of Medicine
88. Jie-fang Rd. 310009 Hangzhou, CHINA

COSTA RICA

This year we had several academic activities on Psoriasis during the Central American and Caribean Congress of Dermatology that took place from 15 to 19 November in Costa Rica.

Because of the Congress cited above, no specific activity was made specifically in October 29th this year, but we are looking forward to implement an activity next year.

Contact:
Laura Alvarez-Morales, MD
Department of Dermatology
Hospital Nacional de Niños
San José, Costa Rica

CROATIA

On World Psoriasis Day October 29th 2011, all university departments in Croatia, in Zagreb, Rijeka, Split and Osijek, have organized “Open day” for patients with psoriasis. The purpose of the manifestation was to inform patients and their families about the disease, new treatment modalities and to give them opportunity to share experiences with other patients.

Contact persons:
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University Department of Dermatology and Veneresology
Zagreb University Hospital Center and School of Medicine,
Salata 4, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia

Professor Marija Kastelan, MD, PhD
Department of dermatovenerology
Clinical hospital Rijeka and Medical school University of Rijeka,
Kresimirova 42, 51000 Rijeka, Croatia
I’d like to inform you that on October 29, 2011, in Kutaisi, Georgia, was held the first scientific and practical conference with initiative of Psoriasis Association of Georgia–PSO Georgia dedicated to World Psoriasis Day. The slogan of conference was “Let’s talk about psoriasis and take actions”. The conference was held at Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University.

It was organized by Psoriasis Association of Georgia-PSO Georgia, the Scientific Research Institute of Dermatology and Venereology, Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University, I. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, faculty of Medicine, the Tbilisi State Medical University, Department of Dermatology and Venereology, Telavi I. Gogebashvili State University, the Georgian Association of Dermatology and Venereology (GADV), the Tbilisi Dermato-Venereological Association (TDVA).

The conference was attended by dermatologists from different cities of Georgia as are: Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Telavi, Batumi, Zugdidi, Poti, Zestafoni, Terjola, Samtredia.

Many important issues and plans were brought up at conference in order to support people suffering from psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.
World Psoriasis Day, an annual event held on October 29, has been marked in Lithuania since 2004. This Day is traditionally held by the joint Congress or meeting between Lithuanian Association of Dermatovenerologists (LAD), Lithuanian Society of Psoriatic Patients (LSPP), health politicians and the media. The primary purpose of the event is to act as a focus for the general public, health politicians, patients, and to raise awareness of the socio-economic impact of psoriasis. World Psoriasis Day in Lithuania is coordinated by Prof. Skaidra Valiukevičienė.

On October 28, 2011 a national conference of the Lithuanian Dermatovenerologists and the Lithuanian Society of Psoriatic Patients was held in Kaunas. The conference was dedicated to the World Psoriasis Day and it aroused considerable interest among dermatovenerologists and their patients. The event attracted 300 participants, media representatives, and guests from the Seimas of the Lithuanian Republic (LRS), and the National Health Insurance Fund. The presentations were made by speakers from Lithuania and other countries, including Prof. dr. Gustav Mahrle from the University of Cologne (Germany) and Assoc. Prof. Kylli Kingo from the University of Tartu (Estonia). During the event, the participants received the National Guidelines on Systemic Treatment and Phototherapy in Psoriasis Management, which are developed pursuant to the European Guidelines 2010 and approved by the Lithuanian Association of Dermatovenerologists.

The conference participants welcomed the first achievements in severe psoriasis management in Lithuania. In 2011, following the recommendations of the LRS Health Committee, the National Health Insurance Fund has appointed an additional budget, for the purchase of biological drugs for 32 patients with severe plaque psoriasis. Until that, biologic treatment of psoriasis was not available for patients in Lithuania.

The question of the higher resource for biological treatment of severe psoriatic patients is forward under discussion. On the occasion of World Psoriasis Day, a special program about social problems caused by psoriasis was shown on national TV.

2011 WORLD PSORIASIS DAY IN LITHUANIA

Photo: Chairwomen of the conference, dedicated to World Psoriasis Day: President of the Association of Dermatovenerologists in Lithuania Assoc. Prof. M. Bylaite (on the left) and the Coordinator of World Psoriasis Day in Lithuania Prof. S. Valiukevičienė.

Contact: Prof. Skaidra Valiukevičienė
Head of the Department of Skin and Venerel Diseases, Medical Academy, Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas
Consultant for Dermatovenerology at the Ministry of Health of Lithuania
Eiveniu 2, 50009 LT, Kaunas

All present renewed last year’s pledge that ‘We have the duty to see that every patient with psoriasis is helped to live his/her normal span of life in perfect health’.

Contact: Prof. Jayakar Thomas,
Professor & Head, Department of Skin & STD,
Sree Balaji Medical College, Chennai
President, Indian Society of TeleDermatology
&Vice President, International Society of TeleDermatology
Res:135, East Mada Church Road,
Royapuram, Chennai 600013 INDIA

Photo: Conference guests on World Psoriasis Day. First row on the left: Delegates of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, National Health Insurance Fund, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of Lithuanian University of Health Science, prof. G. Mahrle(Cologne university) and assoc. prof. K. Kinio (Tartu university).

World Psoriasis Day, which is initiated by the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations, gives a perfect stimulus for the national associations and societies of professionals and patients to update the management of psoriasis.
The Mexican Association Against Psoriasis, A.C., made in the year 2011, two conferences directed at psoriasis patients, their families, the medical community and the general public, as part of their activities also incorporated at the international campaign Under The Spotlight, sponsored by the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA), by making a video that aims to raise awareness worldwide about the great impact of psoriasis on the lives not only of patients but also that of their families and all the associations which work for the year 2012 on the theme: “Let’s talk about Psoriasis and act.”

PRESENTATION TO THE MEDIA OF OUR COUNTRY, UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT VIDEO OF MEXICO.

On October 28, 2011, as part of our advertising campaign to launch the video UTS Mexico, presented in a VIP cinema, different media such as print, radio, television, video chats, etc., where we show through several posters that were put into the canopies, different messages on the invitations and the video that Psoriasis is not contagious but if it is a disease that affects not only the sufferer but also their family, this presentation was well received by the media which are responsible for disseminating information in different spaces.

CONGRESS 29TH OCTOBER 2011.

On the occasion of the celebration of World Psoriasis Day, we conducted several activities prior to our Annual Conference VIII, including press conferences, which promote the release of Under The Spotlight video Mexico, which has been remarkably successful since the 400 people who were in our conference were moved to such a level that shed tears as they witnessed the testimonial of spotlighters well as their families, making one of the many objectives pursued by this video, it is important to know that with this video if you can sensitize the general public about psoriasis, visit with legislators and seek psoriasis patients always have the full access to health so richly deserve.

Contact:
Ricardo Navarro Mendoza
President of AMCPSO
This year’s World Psoriasis Day was a very memorable feat for Psoriasis Philippines (PsorPhil). His Excellency President Benigno Aquino III officially declared Psoriasis Awareness Week on October 23-29, 2011 and every last week of October thereafter under Presidential Proclamation No. 179.

As a pre-celebration of World Psoriasis Day, PsorPhil organized a concert with the theme "PSORROCKS: Music. Equality. Belonging. Respect. Love." This is a public call for people to do something and stop discrimination for psoriasis patients. This event was graced and supported by the Top Bands of the country that included among others: 6 Cyclemind, Brain Damage Control, Calla Lily, Chongkeys, Cueshe, Even, General Luna, Grace Note, Kenyo, Slapshock, Tricia Garcia and Up Dharma Down.

Last October 29, PsorPhil held HUG.4.HOPE as our culminating activity. With the support of the city mayor, we celebrated World Psoriasis Day at Liwasang Aurora, Quezon Memorial Circle, Quezon City. As our yearly tradition, together with the Philippine Dermatological Society, the local government of Quezon City and all the local and hospital psoriasis clubs with their family and friends, we had our Funwalk around Elliptical Road to let the people know that PSORIASIS IS NOT CONTAGIOUS.

This celebration also set the 1-year preparation bid for Guinness Book of Records World’s Biggest Group Hug. PsorPhil will try to break the record on October 2012.

Contact: Josef De Guzman
President/CEO - Psorphil
Member: IFPA Executive Committee
Member: WPD Steering Committee.
Slovene Psoriasis Patients’ Association recently played a key role in the launch of the “Let’s talk about psoriasis and feel it!” campaign.

 Patients with psoriasis are often faced with many stereotypes, prejudices and seemingly hopeless situation. Therefore the campaign aimed to educate Slovenian general public about the Psoriasis issues and change the perception of the disease. The campaign was performed in October 2011 with a peak on World Psoriasis Day.

The novelty of this year’s campaign were special events, which took place before World Psoriasis Day, 29th of October. The outdoor placement of the pavilion in the form of black cube was set in three major Slovenian cities: Maribor, Nova Gorica and Ljubljana. Black box symbolized the feelings of psoriasis patients, when faced with the public perception of the disease: fear, depression, uncertainty, desire to hide. The passers-by were able to enter into the cube and relate to those feelings. In addition to this, the real facts about the disease were presented and ray of hope for the patients was given, showing available treatments, including latest innovative treatments. The visitors had the opportunity to talk to the members of the Association and to ask dermatologists about more complex medical questions. Franc Jamnik, representative of Association said: “Since psoriasis is not directly life-threatening disease, our issues often seem to be left out. The fact is that this disease is extremely difficult and affects the patient in almost all areas – physically and psychologically and it is one of those diseases that most impair patient's quality of life. Patients with psoriasis are often stigmatized, and the public has many stereotypes and prejudices, such as the mistaken belief that psoriasis is contagious. The Association is actively committed to improving this situation.”

On the World Psoriasis Day, 29th October, Patient Association organized 11 events in major cities and presented the following messages to the general public:
- Raising awareness: people with psoriasis should know that we are not alone – there are 125 million of patients worldwide and between 30 and 40 thousand in Slovenia
- Improving access to treatment: health care system stakeholders were asked to continue to provide optimal patient care. Psoriasis is a complex disease and affects almost all aspects of patient's life, especially quality of life. It comes second in ranking of chronic diseases which affect patient's life most – right after Heart failure and before Diabetes, Chronic lung disease, Arthritis, Cancer and others. Those issues are not paid enough attention and the situation in the field of psoriasis should be improved.
- A better understanding of the disease: this would allow more open communication and patients will be able to visit the doctor sooner and began to treat disease. Exterior appearance of this disease is often wrongly perceived and patients are often stigmatized.
- Unified approach: World Psoriasis Day is an opportunity for patients around the world to unite in allign and raise share of voice.

The campaign was very successful and featured in all major Slovenian Media – on public and commercial TV in prime time, in daily newspapers and magazines, on radio, on the web and in social media in more than 70 appearances. 1586 people have signed a petition for better visibility and better access to treatment of psoriasis.

ABOUT SLOVENE PSORIASIS PATIENTS ASSOCIATION
Slovene Psoriasis Patients Association has been existing since 1979. It brings together 2,000 members from all parts of Slovenia and it has 11 branches.

Contact:
Prof. Dr. Jovan Miljković
Head of Department of Dermatology
UKC - Maribor, Slovenia

In celebration of World Psoriasis Day 2011, Acción Psoriasis has organised 6 information sessions in 6 different cities, in collaboration with the Official Pharmaceautical College of each province. The theme for this year celebrations was «Let’s Take Action».

Information Days:

Madrid, 4th November, 18 h.
Córdoba, 8th November, 20 h.
Badajoz, 11th November, 19 h.
Toledo, 14th November, 18 h.
Segovia, 22th November, 18 h.

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 28th November, 18 h.

All psoriatic patients, families, health personnel and general public are welcomed to these sessions. All participants receive a DVD on «Psoriasis: advice to properly and efficienctly apply topical treatment».

Contact:
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Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau
Associate Professor, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
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SPVG – Schweizerische Psoriasis und Vitiligo Gesellschaft:

- A press release was issued in October 2011 to all major newspapers and magazines
- Information about SPVG activities was announced on the SPVG Website and in the SPVG magazine
- In six towns in Switzerland members of the SPVG held information stalls on Saturday 29 October 2011 where they discussed with people and distributed information material. On two stalls, Christina Surer, a famous Swiss female racing driver and ambassador for psoriasis, was also present.

Contact:
Philipp Krähenmann
Information officer of the SPVG

The official WPD 2011 activities report shall be presented by IFPA in the beginning of 2012, when finalised. Please check www.worldpsoriasisday.com for more information.