

Supporting families managing childhood eczema: developing and optimising eczema care online using qualitative research

Families can find managing childhood eczema challenging and report incomplete knowledge and skills, particularly around how best to use treatments. Although eczema can last into adulthood, some parents/carers struggle to involve their child in treatment so they can learn to look after their skin themselves. Eczema Care Online for Families (www.eczemacareonline.org.uk) is a new online intervention to help parents/carers manage childhood eczema and help them teach their children about their eczema and how to look after it.

1 in 5 children have eczema and it can have a big impact on their quality of life and that of their families. Eczema Care Online for Families aims to increase families' knowledge and skills around managing and co-managing eczema with their child. It also provides techniques to help healthcare professionals, teachers, other childcare professions, and parents/carers to talk about eczema treatments in a clear way, which can be a source of confusion for parents/carers as there are two key treatments that are used in different ways.

A team of 25 experts and people with lived experience of eczema helped develop the new intervention. They spoke to 30 parents/carers with children 0-12 years old who had eczema to understand the key challenges for parents/carers managing and co-managing their child's eczema. This information was used to help develop a website to support parents/carers. A further 25 parents/carers commented on the prototype, which was then revised. The final version is now being tested in a randomised trial.