

The Impact of Ethnic Skin Centers in the United States

Rechelle Tull, B.S.¹, Amy McMichael, M.D.¹

Department of Dermatology, Wake Forest School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, NC

Introduction

- By 2044, persons of color, corresponding with Fitzpatrick's Skin Phototypes IV through VI, will represent over half of the United States population.
- There is an increased need for dermatologists with expertise in skin, hair, and nail disorders prevalent among people of color as well as research investigating these conditions.
- Over the past decade, Ethnic Skin Centers have been established as hubs of clinical practice and research.
- Professional organizations, including the Skin of Color Society, the Diversity Task Force of the American Academy of Dermatology, and the Dermatology section of the National Medical Association promote awareness, education, and research pertaining to skin of color.
- We aim to evaluate existing programs and organizations dedicated to the field of skin of color.

Methods

- A comprehensive search was performed using ClinicalTrials.gov, PubMed.gov, and Google.com to locate organizations dedicated to skin of color. Further details were ascertained by e-mail correspondence and phone call.

Organizations that Support Skin of Color		
Organization	Date Established	Mission
American Academy of Dermatology Diversity Task Force	2001	Improve diversity awareness and increase diversity within the field of dermatology and the Academy
Skin of Color Society	2004	Provide support to further research, collaborative efforts, and education pertaining to skin of color
National Medical Association Dermatology Section	1940	Support parity in medicine and eliminate health disparities in medically underserved communities.
Skin of Color Seminar Series	2010	Present evidence-based regarding medical and cosmetic dermatologic treatments for patients of color.

Table 1. The mission and date of establishment of organizations that support skin of color.

Multicultural Skin Centers*					
Institution	Location	Date Established	Number of Faculty	Funding Sources	Research Interests
Howard University Department of Dermatology	Washington, D.C.	1906	3	Dermatology Department	Hair and Scalp Disorders in Ethnic Populations, Acne Keloidalis Nuchae, Pseudofolliculitis Barbae, Hyperpigmentation
Skin of Color Center at Mount Sinai St. Luke's	New York, NY	1999	6	Dermatology Department	Psoriasis in Skin of Color, Cosmetic Procedures, Laser Resurfacing, CCCA, Acne, Keloids
University of Miami Ethnic Skin Care	Miami, FL	2001	2	Grants	Skin Cancer in Minority Populations, Melanoma
Henry Ford Multicultural Dermatology Clinic	Detroit, MI	2003	5	Dermatology Department, Medical Center, Private Donations	Hidradenitis Suppurativa, Melanocyte Keratinocyte Transplant Procedure, CCCA, Skin Cancer in Persons of Color
Northwestern University Center for Ethnic Skin	Chicago, IL	2005	4	Grants	Vitiligo, Keloids, Ethnic Hair
Johns Hopkins Ethnic Skin Program	Baltimore, MD	2010	3	Grants, Industry, Dermatology Department	Mycosis fungoides, Hidradenitis Suppurativa, Scarring Alopecia, Laser treatment for CCCA
Boston University Center for Ethnic Skin	Boston, MA	2012	1	None	Hyperpigmentation, Melasma

Table 2. Characteristics of Multicultural Skin Centers, including affiliated institution, location, date established, number of faculty, and sources of financial support. Abbreviations: CCCA, central centrifugal cicatricial alopecia
* See other Ethnic Skin Centers noted in text below.

Results

Ethnic Skin Centers

- There are 9 Ethnic Skin Centers in the United States. Most centers are located in cities with majority minority populations (Table 2).
- Two institutions, Hampton University Skin of Color Institute and University of Iowa Ethnic Skin Care Clinic, are not listed due to limited information.
- These institutions embrace a trifecta mission:
 - Provide specialized care for the diagnosis and treatment of skin, hair, and nail diseases common among persons of color.
 - Further our understanding of these conditions and improve treatments through clinical and/or translational research.
 - Educate the medical community and public through scientific publications, media interviews, and lectures.
- Ethnic Skin Centers have an average 3.4 faculty (Range: 1 to 6 faculty).
- The Skin of Color Center at Mount Sinai St. Luke's, established in 1999 by Dr. Susan C. Taylor, M.D., was the first center of this type.

Results

Skin of Color Society

- Established in 2004 by Dr. Susan C. Taylor, M.D. to promote awareness, support research, and provide a forum for information exchange pertaining to skin of color.
- Specific endeavors include:
 - Annual Skin of Color Society (SOCS) Symposium
 - SOCS Mentorship Program
 - SOCS Research Award (Annual \$15,000 grant)
 - SOCS Online Dermatology Educational Library
 - SOCS Media Day
- The Society has rapidly grown to include 262 Fellow, Associate, Resident, and Research Fellow members by March 2016.
- American Academy of Dermatology Diversity Task Force**
 - The task force, comprised of 17 physician member and 1 resident member, strives to improve diversity within field of dermatology and the Academy.

Conclusion

- The dermatology community must assess means of providing residents with specialized training in treating patients of color in order to meet the dermatologic needs of the growing minority population in the United States.
- Dermatologists researching skin of color topics can utilize collaborative means to further our knowledge, develop novel therapies, and improve treatment outcomes of conditions prevalent among persons of color.

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