

My experience with the Psychodermatology Diploma Courses – A previous delegate

Psychodermatology is a relatively new discipline in psychosomatic medicine defined as the interaction between mind and skin and there is currently little access to teaching in this important sub speciality.

I am a dermatologist and I was introduced to the topic of psychodermatology after being approached by a keen psychiatry trainee who wanted to learn more about this subject. I was a new dermatology consultant at the time in the United Kingdom with no experience in this field so decided to attend the psychodermatology course in Brussels and What an incredible journey it has been! In summary the course has allowed me to confidently and competently set up my own psychodermatology service and I am so thankful to Françoise Poot and her team for the privilege of taking part in this diploma.

The teacher's passion to teach psychodermatology is infectious. The knowledge they share is priceless and the wealth of experience that they share cannot be obtained from text books. The course has enabled me to meet some incredible colleagues who I have been able to share knowledge with, gain advice from and discuss interesting cases with. It has also afforded me the opportunity to publish psych dermatology by collaborating with colleagues that I have met on the course.

I have particularly enjoyed discussing psychodermatology cases with specialists from psychology and psychiatry as psychodermatology really is a multidisciplinary speciality.

Moving from a face-to-face format to a virtual format (because of the covid pandemic) was surprisingly easy and it provided us with the opportunity to develop 'virtual' communication skills as well as to have more focussed small group discussions. A virtual format also made the course more accessible to delegates worldwide and made it easier for those with families to access and has been so successful that this will continue.

The course enables candidates to develop advanced communication skills in a non-threatening environment to help you to form better doctor, patient relationships.

For dermatologists the course will help you to appreciate why some patients, (for example patients with borderline personality disorders) can make therapeutic relationships more challenging and the course will equip you with skills to overcome these challenges

For those of you hoping to practice more specialised psychodermatology clinics the course will provide you with expertise in using different psychotropic drugs as well as introducing you to different types of psychological therapies

Most importantly you will come away with supportive colleagues and friends who you can continue to grow knowledge and expertise together in this interesting and essential subspecialty.