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## Identification of prognostic factors for people diagnosed with Occupational Contact Dermatitis

### Executive Summary

Occupational contact dermatitis (OCD) accounts for 1 in 5 of all occupational diseases reported in the UK. Up to 70% of sufferers still have the condition after 6 months. The main objectives of this research of international relevance are to

- determine why OCD is so often persistent (frequently sufferers still have the condition after six months, even after exposure to the cause has ceased)
- determine the risk factors that cause persistence so that control of exposure to risk can be improved
- identify particular sensitisers with worst outcome to enable focussed preventative measures to deal with "worst case" allergens
- develop and validate a skin exposure questionnaire to aid assessment of skin exposure to irritants and allergens over time
- identify differences in prognosis for those with irritant versus allergic contact dermatitis

### Strategic Setting

- Occupational contact dermatitis (OCD) accounts for 1 in 5 of all occupational diseases reported in the UK.
- 3,900 new cases of OCD are diagnosed each year
- 39,000 people suffer from skin disease caused or made worse by current or past work.
- OCD frequently results in long term absence from work; those affected often have to leave their jobs.
- Up to 70% of sufferers still have dermatitis after six months.

Characterising the difference in outcomes between workers with an initial diagnosis of irritant contact dermatitis and those with allergic contact dermatitis will help employers to identify appropriate modifications to workplaces and work-practices to assist workers to continue in their chosen occupation. Similarly for outcomes for workers with an initial diagnosis of partially work related contact dermatitis, compared to those with a diagnosis of significantly work related contact dermatitis.

*Bringing employers and researchers together to produce research that will contribute to good employee health and performance at work*

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## **Deliverables**

Designed to help risk assessment and improved control of risk through:

- a skin exposure questionnaire to aid assessment of skin exposure to irritants and allergens over time
- report on, inter alia, risk factors for persistent post-occupational dermatitis; differences in prognosis for those with irritant versus allergic contact dermatitis; prognosis for different allergens

## **What BOHRF Is Seeking**

BOHRF is seeking expressions of interest in contributing funding towards the total project cost of £45,000.