



March 31, 2025

The Honorable Tressa Rae Finerty
Minister-Counsellor
United States of America

CC: Mrs. Margaret Wang; Mrs. Julia Martin; Mr. Charles Wilson; and Mr. Robert McCutcheon

Re: Support for co-sponsoring Skin diseases as a global public health priority

Honorable Minister,

I am addressing you on behalf of the Coalition of Skin Diseases (CSD), a group of 36 national patient advocacy groups, which advocates for the 84 million Americans living with a skin disease.

As the largest consortium of skin disease patient advocacy organizations in the United States, the efforts of the CSD aim to ensure that all individuals living with dermatological diseases and skin traumas receive the care they need to live healthy and productive lives.

By working independently, in coalition, and alongside advocacy organizations committed to patients living with dermatological conditions, the CSD endeavors to be at the forefront of progress toward a day where all individuals affected by skin disease have access to life-preserving/changing treatments and high-quality care. We aim to accomplish this by:

- Fostering education and awareness of skin diseases and disorders;
- Advocating for access to appropriate and quality health care and treatments;
- Contributing to burden and related skin disease research; and
- Strengthening dermatologic patient advocacy organizations through the sharing of resources.

The coalition is passionate about raising the profile of skin disease and supporting those living with a skin disease by providing the patient perspective in medical, research, political and regulatory arenas.

We are joining a global call for action to address the significant public health challenges skin diseases pose in calling on Member States to support and co-sponsor the resolution Skin diseases as a global public health to be considered during the Seventy-eighth World Health Assembly addressing all skin diseases and conditions in an integrated manner, while requesting the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop a comprehensive Global Action Plan.



Skin diseases, while often overlooked, profoundly impact public health and individual well-being. In 2021, there were over 4.69 billion cases of skin disease worldwide, encompassing more than 3,000 identified conditions. The socio-economic burden of skin diseases, compounded by the growing impact of climate change, places them among the top 10 causes of disability globally.

Given the United States of America's leadership in achieving universal health coverage, we believe your involvement can significantly amplify this critical health issue on the global stage and foster effective strategies to mitigate the burden of skin diseases worldwide.

We encourage you to support Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Togo, Micronesia, Egypt, China, and Colombia in leading this resolution and to advocate for a holistic approach that prioritizes all skin diseases at the national level. This resolution emphasizes the following key elements:

- ✓ **Targets all skin diseases**, including allergies, inflammatory diseases, autoimmune diseases, genetic diseases, vascular diseases, cancers, infections (viral, bacterial and fungal) and rare autoinflammatory diseases.
- ✓ **Prioritizes the perspective of patients and their caregivers** in all aspects of planning and implementation.
- ✓ **Bolsters local production of generic medications**, leading and facilitating skin-health **research** and improving **healthcare training** with resultant increased economic activity and health equity.
- ✓ **WHO Global Action Plan** to establish a framework for addressing skin diseases globally, focusing on prevention, early detection, effective treatment, and long-term care, with specific targets. It will also provide guidance for developing national and regional policies, promoting multisectoral collaboration, and aligning with global health priorities such as UHC and the SDGs.
- ✓ **Calls for dedicated health investment** to expand expertise, particularly among primary health care workers, enabling them timely diagnosis and effective support for those living with skin diseases.
- ✓ **Supports the expansion of research capacity** to provide innovative diagnostic tools and new treatments.

We sincerely thank you for your consideration of this vital global initiative. We remain available for further discussions and would welcome the opportunity to provide additional context on how this resolution would benefit our country. Please feel free to contact me at kelly@coalitionofskindiseases.org.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelly Barta', written over a light gray rectangular background.

Kelly Barta
Executive Director
Coalition of Skin Diseases

Attachment: Skin Disease Resolution Draft:

https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB156/B156_CONF9-en.pdf