



Press Release – For Immediate Release

The first ‘virtual’ non-surgical biopsy for skin cancer in the UK

The Skin Care® Network has become the first clinic in the UK to use the revolutionary new Confocal Microscope, the Vivascope, which can remove the need for surgical biopsies of suspect and abnormal areas of the skin.

The technology was introduced by London dermatological surgeon, Dr Howard Stevens, who has an international reputation for leading innovation in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancers.

“Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the UK today and the incidence is growing every year. This new technology is a real step forward in diagnostics. The sooner a patient has a diagnosis, the sooner he or she can begin treatment if there is a problem,” said Dr Stevens. “But often there is no problem and we will have avoided the discomfort of a surgical biopsy and then more anxiety whilst the patient waits for the results.”

“What this new technology does is to provide a fast diagnosis, reduce the number of unnecessary biopsies and we can monitor a suspect area of the skin – painlessly and non-invasively - over long periods. It can provide a diagnosis where there have been uncertainties before and it can help to monitor treatments and also show us when treated skin has returned to normal.”

“Our patients have been unanimous in their positive reaction to ‘virtual biopsies’. So while skin biopsy will remain the gold standard in some cases, confocal microscopy can provide an additional layer of information to avoid an unnecessary biopsy,” he said.

The Skin Care® Network is the first and only practice of its kind in the country to use integrated video dermoscopy with the confocal microscope.

The Vivascope uses a focused laser beam to illuminate a specific point within the skin and measures the reflection of light from that point. It detects malignancies in real time and gives the dermatologist and the patient instant results.

Because the skin remains unaffected by surgery, confocal microscopy allows the safe imaging of any aspect of a lesion as many times as needed. Images are collected, completely painlessly, and stored in digital format which means they can be easily emailed for referral consultation, unlike conventional pathology slides.

Ends

To talk to patients who have experienced the benefits of the new technology and for further media information on the technology and The Skin Care® Network, please contact Neil Huband on:

07808 298989 or 0207 436 6372 or neilhuband@prioritycounsel.com

Note to Editors

The Skin Care® Network provides world class screening, diagnosis and treatment of all skin conditions for both adults and children at its two centres in central and north London. Consultants also see patients at a number of major private hospitals in London

The Network not only serves patients from London and the Home Counties, but also those from further afield in the UK and others coming from as far away as the Middle East and beyond. Patients are either self-funded or their medical diagnosis and treatment is covered and paid for by private medical insurance policies.

Founded by one of the UK's most respected consultant dermatological surgeons, Dr Howard Stevens, The Network has an international reputation in particular as a centre for screening and for the treatment of skin cancers and other skin conditions.

The Network also provides a range of advanced cosmetic treatments, often to complement previous medical and surgical treatments.

Its eight senior consultants and team of highly trained and qualified specialist dermatology nurses, have mostly trained and practiced at some of the Capital's renowned teaching hospitals and indeed, some of its consultants currently hold senior positions within those NHS hospitals.

Unlike some other organisations, The Network does not employ 'beauticians' and the like.

The Skin Care® Network was the first dermatology practice in London to have the benefit of high level Multi-Disciplinary Teams, (MDTs) to review treatment programmes of more complex cancer cases and other conditions, ensuring that patients receive the benefits of the very latest care techniques.

The Network's doctors and nurses are well aware that patients can be anxious, having suspected a problem and the practice has a policy of ensuring fast access to senior consultants at centres in Barnet, north London and in the Fulham Road in Chelsea.

For more information please visit: www.skincarenetwork.co.uk

Ends