

# **Hair Loss in Women of Color Toolkit: A step toward closing the gap**

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# Background

- **Hair loss is a primary reason for women of color to seek dermatologic care.**
- **We looked to the American Academy of Dermatology for resources and advocacy efforts**
- **None of the six main public programs (<https://www.aad.org/public/public-health>) nor any of the eight “Academy Advocacy Priorities” (<https://www.aad.org/member/advocacy/priorities>) focus on outreach to minority communities.**

# Common dermatologic disorders in skin of color: a comparative practice survey, 2007

## Leading Diagnoses Observed

Diagnosis codes of 1412 patient visits from August 2004 through July 2005 at the Skin of Color Center at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center, in New York.

African-American	Caucasian
Acne	Acne
Dyschromia	Lesion of unspecified behavior
Contact Dermatitis & other eczema	Benign neoplasm of skin of trunk
Alopecia	Contact Dermatitis & other eczema
Seborrheic Dermatitis	Psoriasis

Table adapted from their results

## Leading Diagnoses Observed

African-American	Caucasian	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic/LatinX
Acne	Actinic keratosis	Acne	Acne
Unspecified dermatitis or eczema	Acne	Unspecified dermatitis or eczema	Unspecified dermatitis or eczema
Seborrheic dermatitis	Benign neoplasm of skin of trunk	Benign neoplasm of skin	Psoriasis
Atopic dermatitis	Unspecified dermatitis or eczema	Psoriasis	Benign neoplasm of skin
Dyschromia	Non-melanoma skin cancer	Seborrheic keratosis	Viral warts
Psoriasis	Seborrheic keratosis	Atopic Dermatitis	Actinic keratosis
Alopecia ←	Viral warts	Viral warts	Seborrheic keratosis
Keloid scar	Psoriasis	Urticaria	Sebaceous cyst
Viral warts	Rosacea	Sebaceous cyst	Rosacea
Sebaceous cyst	Sebaceous cyst	Seborrheic dermatitis	Dyschromia

Table adapted from their results

# An Approach to Patients with Alopecia, 2021

**The psychosocial impact of hair loss can be substantial on patients.**

- **Higher rate of psychiatric disorders, such as depression and anxiety**
- **Report:**
  - Loss of confidence
  - Heightened self-consciousness
  - Low self-esteem.

**Considering the significant emotional and physical burden of alopecia, it is essential for clinicians to regard hair loss as more than a cosmetic issue.**

# Event

**The Virginia Dermatology Society planned a virtual event on hair loss and practical political advocacy for women of color in July 2021.**

**Event attendees completed pre-and post-event Likert-scale surveys which assessed participant attitudes, knowledge, and awareness surrounding hair loss.**



# SURVEYS

**Virginia Dermatology Society**  
**CROWN Event**  
**PATIENTS – NON-MEDICAL PERSONNEL**  
**PRE-SURVEY**

Please rate the following by circling the number which best applies to you NOW. (1 = lowest and 5 = highest)

I am aware that hair loss is an important topic and impacts many women from all ethnicities	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the efforts to increase awareness around hair loss in women of color	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the various and specific resources for hair loss in women of color	1	2	3	4	5
I feel comfortable reaching to my state representative regarding legislation that may impact me	1	2	3	4	5
I feel empowered to speak up about hair loss and make a difference for myself and others	1	2	3	4	5

1. The issue that I feel is most challenging for women experiencing hair loss is:
2. What specific information and/or support do you wish you had regarding the issues surrounding hair loss?
3. The one thing I hope to learn that will make this event successful for me is:

**Virginia Dermatology Society**  
**CROWN Event**  
**PATIENTS – NON-MEDICAL PERSONNEL**  
**POST - SURVEY**

Please rate the following by circling the number which best applies to you NOW. (1 = lowest and 5 = highest)

I am aware that hair loss is an important topic and impacts many women from all ethnicities	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the efforts to increase awareness around hair loss in women of color	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the various and specific resources for hair loss in women of color	1	2	3	4	5
I feel comfortable reaching to my state representative regarding legislation that may impact me	1	2	3	4	5
I feel empowered to speak up about hair loss and make a difference for myself and others	1	2	3	4	5

Please share the 3 things you plan to do differently as a result of this event:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

The most impactful part of this event was: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please rate this CROWning Event:

BELOW EXPECTATIONS

MET EXPECTATIONS

EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS

Additional feedback I would like to share is: \_\_\_\_\_

# Pre-event Data

Likert Scale Questions Average Results

Statement	Pre-event
I am aware that hair loss is an important topic and impacts many women from all ethnicities	4.8
I am familiar with the efforts to increase awareness around hair loss in women of color	3.71
I am familiar with the various and specific resources for hair loss in women of color	2.99
I feel comfortable reaching to my state representative regarding legislation that may impact me	3.48
I feel empowered to speak up about hair loss and make a difference for myself and others	3.70

## Pre-event Survey

Total responses: 399

### Participant demographics

HCP: 189 (47.4%)

Non- HCP: 210 (52.6%)

Dermatologists: 104 (26.1)

Patients: 115 (28.8%)

The issue that I feel is most challenging for women experiencing hair loss is: (n=188)

Self-esteem/worth, embarrassment

Treatment efficacy

Lack of Knowledge/Understanding

What specific information and/or support do you wish you had regarding the issues surrounding hair loss? (n=163)

Treatments/resources

Hair loss prevention

How to grow and regrow hair

The one thing I hope to learn that will make this event successful for me is: (n=176)

Hair loss prevention

Resources/treatments for hair loss

Caring for natural/ethnic hair

# Toolkit

Based on peer-reviewed articles, prevention strategies, diagnosing, and treating different types of patients that physicians find beneficial for dermatologists, as well as distributional articles, links, and videos that would be helpful to patients.

Pre-event Survey
Total responses: 399
Participant demographics HCP: 189 (47.4%) Non- HCP: 210 (52.6%) Dermatologists: 104 (26.1) Patients: 115 (28.8%)
The issue that I feel is most challenging for women experiencing hair loss is: (n=188) Self-esteem/worth, embarrassment Treatment efficacy Lack of Knowledge/Understanding ←
What specific information and/or support do you wish you had regarding the issues surrounding hair loss? (n=163) Treatments/resources ← Hair loss prevention How to grow and regrow hair
The one thing I hope to learn that will make this event successful for me is: (n=176) Hair loss prevention Resources/treatments for hair loss ← Caring for natural/ethnic hair

# TOOLKIT

Patient Toolkit	Number of Resources
Skin of Color Society (SoCS)	3
American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)	5
Patient coping strategies + support groups/societies (in addition to AAD/SoCS above)	6
Advocacy	3
Find a Dermatologist	3
Trusted Sources on Social Media	5
Books	2
Haircare handouts from real dermatologists with expertise in hair & hair disorders	2

# The Event

Presentations by:

- Two patients suffering from a hair loss disorder
- A dermatologist with experience in advocacy
- A Virginia state legislator
- A dermatologic hair loss expert

Final question-and-answer session.

**165 attendees**



# Post-event Data

Post-event survey
Total responses: 70
Participant demographics Anonymous
Please share the 3 things you plan to do differently as a result of this event: (n=69) Find/go to a dermatologist Learn more about different hairstyles Learn about black-owned products
Please rate this CROWNING Event: (n=70) Below Expectations: 0 (0.0%) Meets Expectations: 11 (15.7%) Exceeds Expectations: 59 (84.3%)

Likert Scale Questions Average Results				
Statement	Pre-event	Post-event	z	p-value
I am aware that hair loss is an important topic and impacts many women from all ethnicities	4.8	4.97	-1.57	0.1164
I am familiar with the efforts to increase awareness around hair loss in women of color	3.71	3.79	-0.45	0.6527
I am familiar with the various and specific resources for hair loss in women of color	2.99	3.57	-3.34	<b>0.0008</b>
I feel comfortable reaching to my state representative regarding legislation that may impact me	3.48	3.71	-1.51	0.1310
I feel empowered to speak up about hair loss and make a difference for myself and others	3.70	4.21	-3.55	<b>0.0004</b>

# Discussion/Take Aways

**Hair loss in women of color = health disparity due to lack of education/understanding**

**Dermatologists can serve a vital role in advocating for the skin and hair needs of all patients**

**Advocacy/Education events can improve understanding and empowerment of attendees**

# Conclusion

**Alopecia (hair loss) is a primary reason that women of color seek dermatologic care.**

**Unfortunately, a deficit in dermatology advocacy efforts that address conditions affecting people of color exist.**

**Resource toolkits combined with outreach events can be used to engage communities, disseminate information, and close gaps that have led to healthcare disparities.**

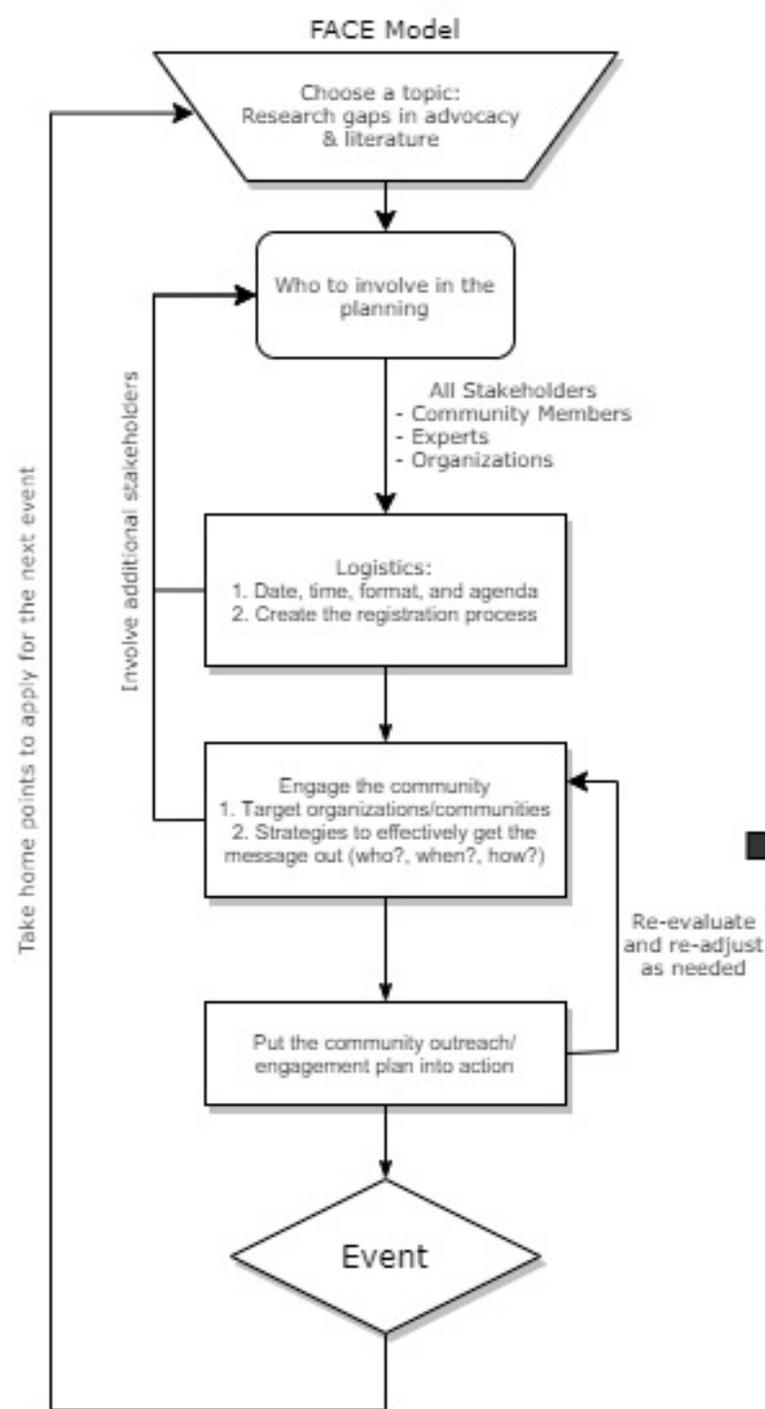
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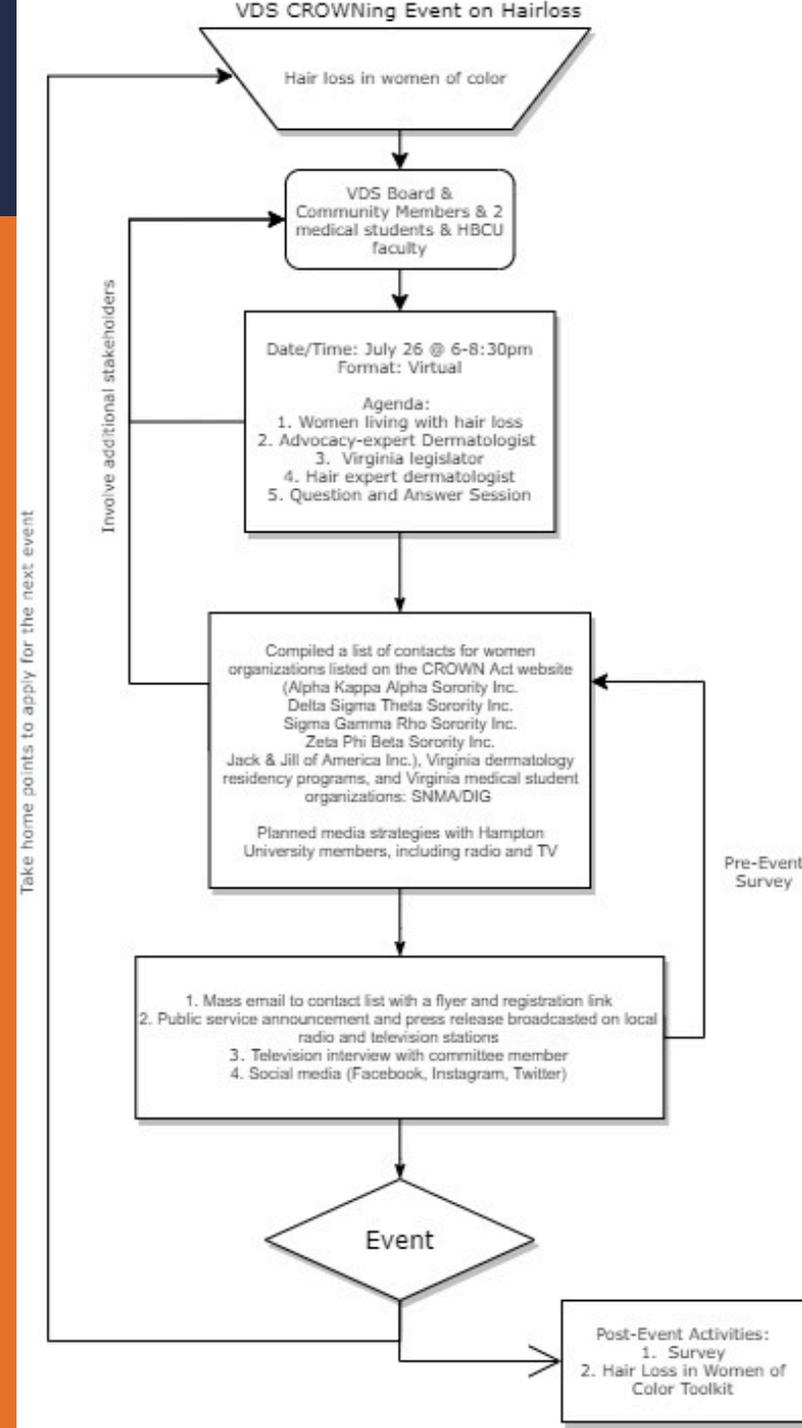
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**For more information, see**

**<https://vaderm.org/hair-loss-women-of-color>**







# Limitations

Low (42%) response to post-event survey