The study has been approved by Camberwell St Giles NRES Committee Ref: 12/LO/0001

If you have any questions about the study then please feel free to contact us on: 07834 619 826

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There are more details about our study at http://www.idrn.org/scabies/

Thank you for your help with our study

If you have any concerns or complaints about the study please get in touch with the Scabies Research Team at the above address.

Do all residents/staff have to take part?
No, it's up to them and is entirely voluntary.

What are the risks of taking part?
There are no risks of taking part in the study, although skin scrapings and blood tests can be slightly uncomfortable. Older people are more at risk of bruising after giving a blood sample.

What happens if a resident/staff member decides to withdraw from the study?
It is up to an individual to decide if they want to withdraw from the study and we will not approach them again if they do so. We will not be able to withdraw any data already collected, but this will be anonymised.

Who will care for residents/staff during the study?
Throughout the study, their own doctor will remain fully responsible for their medical care, as usual.

Who will provide outbreak guidance during the study?
The Health Protection Unit will continue to provide guidance and support during the outbreak as they are specialists in this area.

What happens at the end of the study?
We will send you a report of the research findings and details of our publications.

Who does the study involve?
The study involves researchers from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Brighton and Sussex Medical School and the NHS. It is funded by Public Health England and the British Skin Foundation.
Scabies and skin disease
Scabies is a skin condition caused by a tiny mite which burrows into the skin. Scabies has nothing to do with cleanliness but can often cause outbreaks in residential care/nursing homes and can be passed from one person to another through skin contact. Scabies is easily treatable but it can be very distressing because it can be very itchy. In older people the diagnosis of scabies may be difficult because the signs of scabies may be unusual and not easily recognised.

What is the study about?
We know that scabies outbreaks in residential care/nursing homes are difficult to manage and take up a lot of time and resources. People can have scabies and not realise it, and this makes it difficult to identify everybody who has scabies and harder to control an outbreak. The purpose of this study is to find out the signs of scabies in people in residential care/nursing homes for the elderly to help to diagnose and treat scabies quicker and more easily.

Confidentiality
The study is completely voluntary and is totally anonymous, so it's up to you whether you want your home to take part. Individual residents and staff will be asked to take part in the study but if they don't want to, that's fine – they don't have to give a reason. The details of your care/nursing home, individual personal details and all clinical data will be anonymised. Your home and your residents and staff will not be able to be identified. We do however have a duty to disclose any health issues we might find during the examination and will only use a resident's name if we need to contact their GP in these circumstances. We will ask staff for permission to contact their GP.

What are the advantages of taking part?

Specialist examinations
Specialist skin doctors (dermatologists) would like to examine the skin of residents and staff members of the home who agree to take part. Knowing who has scabies can help to manage the outbreak more successfully. This type of examination is not routinely provided as part of NHS care in this context.

Improving the treatment of scabies
We are passionate about improving the diagnosis and treatment of scabies. This is the first research study of its kind and data from the study will also help us to provide education and support for health care professionals to diagnose scabies earlier and help to reduce outbreaks. It will also help us to design future studies to find the best treatment for scabies for people who are living and working in residential care/nursing homes, and better manage scabies outbreaks when they occur. You can help us to achieve this.

Financial support
We appreciate your involvement in the study and we don't want to get in the way of your work. We do need a member of your staff to chaperone us whenever we’re talking to or examining residents and we are happy to pay for members of your staff to work with us during the visits.

What does taking part in the study involve?

Preliminary visit
We would like to visit you as soon as possible to explain the study to you and your staff and to answer any questions you may have. We also will need to establish which residents have the capacity to consent to the study themselves. For those that do not, we will need the contact details of their relatives or friends so that we can talk to them about the study. We will also ask you to complete a short questionnaire about your home and details of the suspected scabies outbreak.

Clinical visit
Soon after (ideally before your first mass treatment) we will organise a clinical visit with dermatologists who will examine residents and staff members of the home who agree to take part. Knowing who has scabies can help to manage the outbreak more successfully. This type of examination is not routinely provided as part of NHS care in this context.

Follow-up visit
We will repeat the clinical visit six weeks later and may wish to perform skin scrapings, ink tests, a small blood and photographs as before. We will also ask you to feedback your experiences of managing the outbreak and taking part in the study.