

# Foreword

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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *European Medical Journal - Dermatology*. A distinguishing feature of this journal is its focus on congress reviews as well as breaking news and analysis including perspectives from industry.

Dermatology is witnessing a renaissance. New technologies are interrogating the genomic *terra incognita* of skin disease. The torrent of data from these studies is giving rise to new-targeted treatments that take advantage of disease specific molecular targets.

Personalised medicine profiles an individual's molecular characteristics and exploits those genetic distinctions to increase diagnostic precision that ultimately leads to the use of a targeted therapy. Diseases are no longer viewed as homogenous entities but rather as diverse heterogeneous sub-types due to genomic differences.

It appears that personalised medicine in dermatology clinical practice is coming of age. For example, the inherited blistering disease epidermolysis bullosa, is due to a cadre of single gene mutations associated with the extracellular matrix. Recognition of these mutations is allowing for improved diagnosis and classification as well as heralding for the first time new gene, protein and cell based therapies. The identification of hedgehog pathway mutations in basal cell carcinoma, and activating mutations in BRAF in melanoma, has resulted in new classes of targeted cancer therapies. Genome wide expression profiling in patients with scleroderma reveals that patients with localised disease have an inflammatory expression signature whereas patients with diffuse disease have a fibrotic expression signature. Excitingly, these observations could result in new treatment profiles with anti-inflammatory or anti-fibrotic agents, depending on the presence of localised or diffuse disease.

The *European Medical Journal - Dermatology* will be uniquely poised to deliver to its readership the latest breakthroughs in dermatology including those involving personalised medicine.



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