



PHILADELPHIA PHYSICIANS HONORED FOR TEAMWORK

Dermatologist and infectious disease specialist work together to treat patient with leprosy

ROSEMONT, Ill. (Feb. 21, 2019) — The American Academy of Dermatology has honored Carrie Kovarik, MD, FAAD, and Keith Hamilton, MD, as Patient Care Heroes for their collaboration to improve patient care. Both physicians teach and practice medicine at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Because Dr. Hamilton, an infectious disease specialist, knew that Dr. Kovarik, a dermatologist, had significant international experience, he asked her to help with a patient with a suspected case of leprosy — a well-known condition that is quite rare in the United States. Dr. Kovarik confirmed a diagnosis of lepromatous leprosy.

“In addition to antibiotics, treating leprosy involves suppressing the immune system, something that dermatologists are familiar with from their work treating psoriasis and other autoimmune conditions,” Dr. Hamilton said. “Dr. Kovarik was incredibly helpful in ensuring this patient received the best possible care.”

Drs. Kovarik and Hamilton saw the patient, who had traveled abroad, during a joint visit, and together they devised an appropriate treatment plan. They continued to collaborate as the patient healed, making adjustments as needed.

“Collaborative relationships between doctors who work in different specialties is essential for good patient care, especially with complicated cases,” Dr. Kovarik said. “There are a lot of factors that can make collaboration and coordination among doctors complicated, but we know it is essential to providing patients with the best possible care.”

The AAD created the Patient Care Heroes program to recognize physicians who transform patients’ lives by utilizing their expertise and collaborating with other physicians to treat serious skin disease.

“Patients are increasingly seeing a team of clinicians, not just one doctor, so it’s incredibly important —and rewarding — for physicians to build relationships across specialties and draw from one another’s expertise,” said Suzanne Olbricht, MD, FAAD, president of the AAD. “The partnership between Drs. Kovarik and Hamilton improved the patient’s care and resulted in a better experience. That’s a win-win for everyone, especially our patients.”

To learn more about how Drs. Kovarik and Hamilton worked together, visit <https://www.aad.org/about/skinserious/keith-hamilton>.

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About SkinSerious

SkinSerious is a campaign by the American Academy of Dermatology that highlights dermatologists' role as partners in the health care system, providing expert care for serious conditions. To learn more, visit SkinSerious.org.

About the AAD

Headquartered in Rosemont, Ill., the American Academy of Dermatology, founded in 1938, is the largest, most influential, and most representative of all dermatologic associations. With a membership of more than 20,000 physicians worldwide, the AAD is committed to: advancing the diagnosis and medical, surgical and cosmetic treatment of the skin, hair and nails; advocating high standards in clinical practice, education, and research in dermatology; and supporting and enhancing patient care for a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. For more information, contact the AAD at 1-888-462-DERM (3376) or aad.org. Follow the AAD on [Facebook](#) (American Academy of Dermatology), [Twitter](#) (@AADskin) or [YouTube](#) (AcademyofDermatology).