General research activities in your country related to UV health

Several research groups have published and been active in the field of UV and skin cancer during this period, e.g. universities, university hospitals, Cancer Registry of Norway, Norwegian Institute for Air Research, as well as the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (NRPA). Ongoing projects include epidemiologic studies related to melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers, UV effect studies, cost-benefit analyses of melanoma, studies on sun-related behaviour and attitudes, as well as on UV related to the climate.

New policies and legislations regarding UV and optical exposure

Norway has not issued any new legislation during this period.

Areas of public concern and national responses

The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (NRPA) is for 2017-2018 given the assignment from the Ministry of Health and Care Services to form a national strategy to reduce skin cancer incidence and mortality. The working group, led by NRPA, consists of leading authorities and institutions with means and instruments to support the work. Volunteer organizations and NGOs are also engaged. The proposal will be handed over to the Ministry in September.

In September 2017, NRPA, together with over 200 of Norway’s 426 municipalities, conducted a national inspection campaign to enforce recent regulations regarding indoor tanning, and inform both undertakings and the public about the regulations. New regulations were issues in 2015 to 2017 on system to uphold the 18-year age limit, information to the clients regarding health risks, and mandatory competence tests for operative responsible persons and staff. Results show low compliance with the regulations.

The Norwegian Cancer Society supported by NRPA perform a survey of sun habits and attitudes about every second year, the latest one in 2018 for the general population (age 18+; 1073 respondents). We see a tendency to increased use of sunscreen with higher SPF and decreased use of sunbeds.

The Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment suggests to prepare a risk/benefit assessment of sunscreen as protection against sun exposure. The aim is to compare any health benefits by using sunscreen, such as preventing skin cancer, with any health damage associated with sunscreen use, either substances in the sunscreen or because the sun protection is not effective. VKM will assess Norwegian conditions. The protocol will be subjected to a web-based public consultation during the spring 2018.

New public information activities

Every year, prior to Easter holiday and schools’ summer vacation, NRPA in collaboration with the Norwegian Cancer Society, Norwegian Meteorological Institute and Norwegian Institute for Air Research publish joint press releases regarding UV situation and sun protection. Occasions and days with high UV intensities also initiates media contact.

A skin cancer attention day was carried out by the Norwegian Cancer Society 23 May. This was connected to Euromelanoma, but without any skin checking. Euromelanoma took place
in Norway in 2014 to 2017, as a collaboration between the Norwegian Society of Dermatology and Venerology and the Norwegian Cancer Society.

The work with the national UV- and skin cancer strategy has attracted much attention by organizations working within primary and secondary prevention, as well as by the public and by media.

NRPA has initiated two information campaigns related to indoor tanning the last year, one engaging a school nurse communicating with adolescence on Snapchat, and the other releasing a video presented on Facebook. Both attracted a lot of attention and followers.

Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority