Topic Brief: Organized Light

Date: 5/15/2024
Nomination Number: 1080

Purpose: This document summarizes the information addressing a nomination submitted on February 20, 2024, through the Effective Health Care Website (link to topic nomination). This information was used to inform the Evidence-based Practice Center (EPC) Program decisions about whether to produce an evidence report on the topic, and if so, what type of evidence report would be most suitable.

Issue: The nominator of this topic is a device manufacturer who would like to develop studies examining the use of "organized light" therapy for healing.

Findings: The EPC program develops systematic reviews to inform healthcare decision-making by clinical professional groups, clinicians, healthcare organizations, patients, and others. The EPC Program does not conduct primary research nor participate in the development or approval of medical devices, and therefore will not consider this topic further.

Background

Various forms of light therapy, also called "phototherapy," have been used in attempts to treat medical conditions since ancient times.[1] In modern medicine, ultraviolet light in the form of blue and red LED light has been used to address skin appearance and conditions like newborn jaundice, psoriasis, and eczema.[2, 3] Bright light therapy has also been studied as a complimentary treatment for depression when used in tandem with pharmacotherapy,[4] and as a potential treatment for seasonal affective disorder.[5] Phototherapy may be administered by a clinician or administered at home.[3] While there are many light therapy devices available to purchase for at-home use, a subset have been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA).[6]

According to the nominator's website, their organized light device does not use LED light, but instead utilizes the light of an incandescent bulb filtered through "resonance-calibrated color filters."[7] This device has not been approved by the FDA at this time. The nominator is specifically interested in primary research to investigate the effectiveness of their device. The AHRQ-EPC program does not conduct primary research nor participate in the development or approval of medical devices.

References

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Conflict of Interest: None of the investigators have any affiliations or financial involvement that conflicts with the material presented in this report.

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