



National Alopecia Areata Foundation

### National Alopecia Areata Foundation (NAAF) Statement to Medical Providers 2015

The National Alopecia Areata Foundation (NAAF) is an internationally known non-profit organization founded in 1981 with a mission to “support those with the disease, support research to find a cure or acceptable treatment for alopecia areata, and educate the public about alopecia areata”. NAAF is dedicated to the three main focus areas of support, research, and education which includes awareness and advocacy.

NAAF offers many resources to support those with alopecia areata and their medical providers. There are dozens of support groups available both nationally and internationally to facilitate meeting others with shared experiences of autoimmune hair loss. NAAF sponsors a four-day empowering annual international conference in which hundreds of individuals with alopecia areata gather together to learn about current relevant research updates, cosmetics and headwear items, and most importantly meet others like them. Through the Ascot Fund, NAAF offers scholarships for wigs for children and adults. The NAAF main office provides numerous brochures and flyers that are ready to be mailed to any dermatology office. Also, multiple educational webinars are available online for patients.

Regarding research, NAAF established a Registry, Biobank, and Clinical Trials Network (Registry) which contains over 3,900 patient samples. Since its creation in 2000, these samples have been used within immunologic, genetic, and clinical trial research to help find a cure or acceptable treatment for alopecia areata. As there is no FDA-approved treatment specifically for alopecia areata, every research endeavor is an opportunity for a groundbreaking discovery that can change the lives of millions. NAAF offers grants for research related to alopecia areata and recommends that medical providers encourage all individuals with alopecia areata to sign up for the Registry and provide samples.

Patient self-advocacy and advocacy for federal research funding are essential. NAAF provides educational information for the classroom, workplace, and relationship partners in order to increase awareness and understanding of alopecia areata. NAAF also works at the county, state, and national levels to promote policy change and increase funding for alopecia areata and related research.

Lastly, research has shown that those with alopecia areata carry significant psychosocial burden and experience a poor quality of life compared to the general population. Therefore, NAAF recommends that medical professionals who treat patients with alopecia areata consider mental health screening. Asking open ended questions about one’s quality of life and listening can lead to helpful referrals to mental health specialists which benefits both patient and provider.

Please visit the NAAF website at [www.naaf.org](http://www.naaf.org) for more information and encourage your patients with alopecia areata to visit this website as well. You can order patient educational brochures and flyers by emailing [info@naaf.org](mailto:info@naaf.org).

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