



Development of an online-intervention to prevent self-stigmatization in people with visible chronic skin diseases

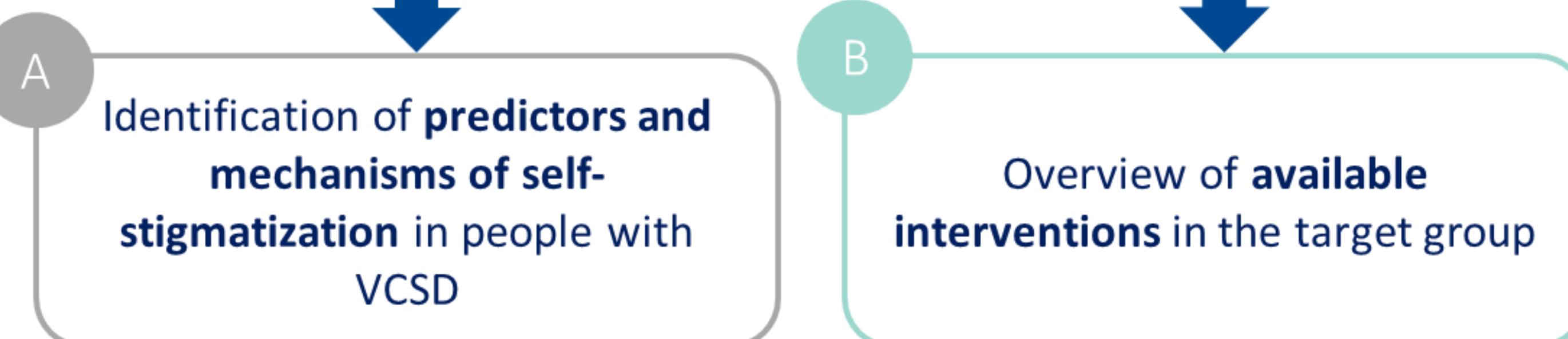
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INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

People with visible chronic skin diseases (VCSD) experience social and self-stigmatization, which has a major contribution to their perceived overall disease burden. The World Health Assembly encouraged its member states to improve quality of care of those affected, including actions against stigmatization. This was the starting point of several international activities to reduce stigmatization in people with VCSD, including the development and evaluation of an online-intervention – *HautKompass* - aiming to prevent/reduce self-stigmatization in people with VCSD (Funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research; funding number: 01GY2105).

MATERIALS & METHODS

Phase 1: Systematic Reviews on Identifying Intervention Targets and Strategies



Phase 2: Development and Pilot Testing of Feasibility of Online Intervention program „HautKompass“

Phase 3: Evaluation of Efficacy through a Randomized Control Trial study

DEVELOPMENT HAUTKOMPASS



RESULTS

SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEWS



HAUTKOMPASS

- Format: Self-guided, online, with interactive exercises
- Length: Each session approximately 30 minutes
- Duration: 8 weeks when completed on a weekly basis
- The self-compassion approach is used to improve body image, self-esteem, and acceptance and to recognize and reverse the cycle of social anxiety and avoidance.
- Able to use ID code and password to save progress and return later

EXAMPLE OF EXERCISES

Exercise 4: Transform self-criticism into self-compassion
 Please write an alternative version using self-compassion. Imagine you are writing a compassionate letter to yourself.

Dear _____

[text]

How did this exercise make you feel?

[text]

Now type in the attributes you value in these people and the characteristics* that contributed to their achievements.

Write something

Calm	Calm
Kind	Kind
Organized	Organized
Reliable	Reliable
Considerate	Considerate

*Write up to 10 characteristics

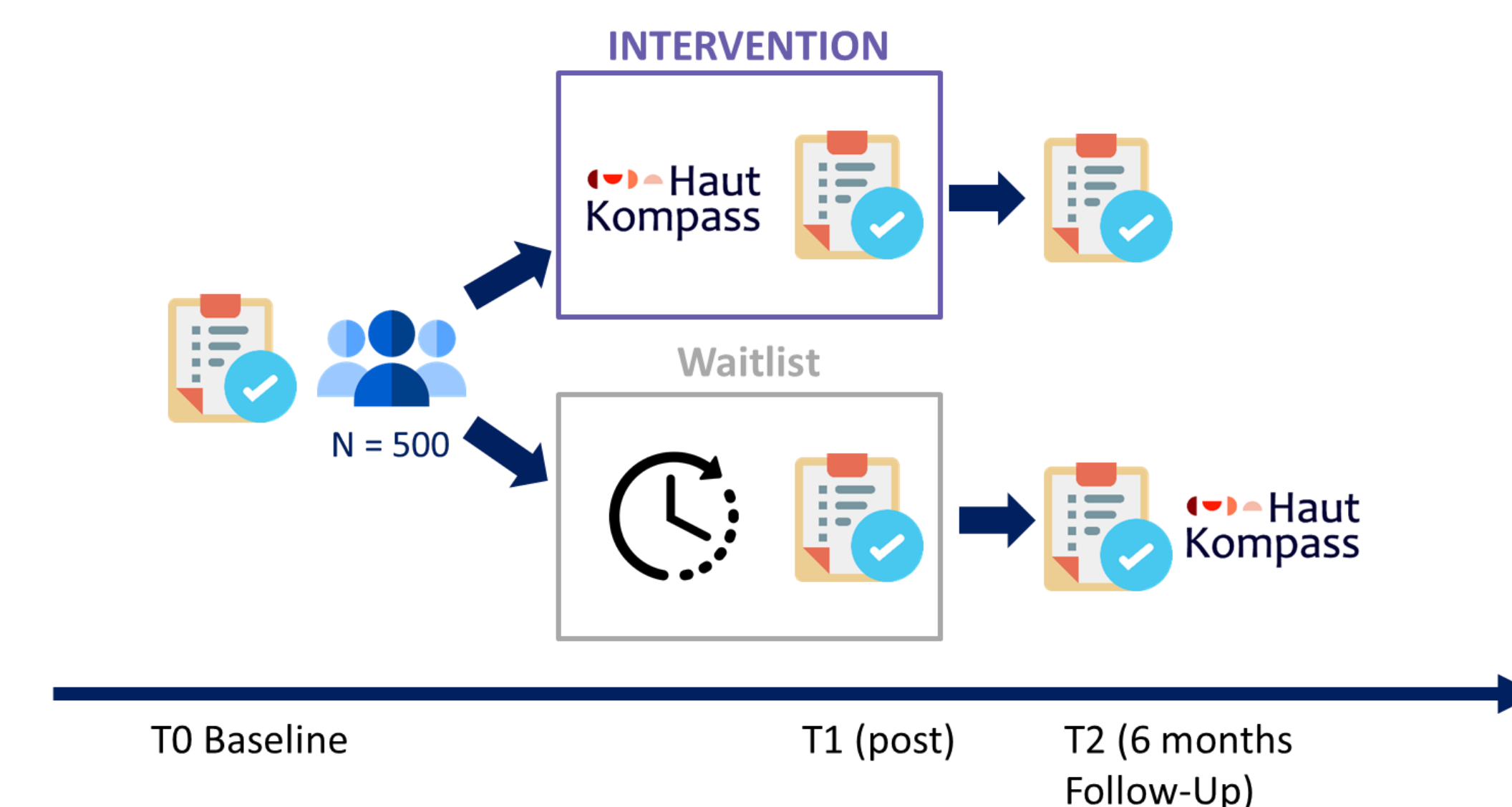
The same applies to you!
 You are more than your body. You have many positive qualities. Becoming aware of these qualities can improve your view of yourself as a person, or your self-esteem.

CONCLUSION & OUTLOOK

- *HautKompass* will be tested with regard to its feasibility (pilot-test) and effectiveness using a randomized controlled design
- Recruitment: 17 recruitment centers (hospitals/clinics/praxis) + Patient Organizations across Germany

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- N = 500 patients with atopic dermatitis, alopecia areata, hidradenitis suppurativa, psoriasis, and vitiligo (n = 100 per diagnosis)
- Screened for self-reported skin disease diagnosis, severe mental illness, depression (PHQ-2), anxiety (GAD-2), age (≥18)

RCT Design



List of measures

Self Stigma	Weight Bias Internalization Scale– adapted for skin disease
Illness Identity	Inclusion of Illness in the Self Scale
Quality of Life	Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI) EUROHIS-QOL-8
Anxiety	Generalized Anxiety Disorder Screener (GAD-7)
Depression	Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)
Suicidality	Paykel Suicide Scale
Coping	Body Image Coping Strategies Inventory
Body Image	Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire Cutaneous Body Image Scale
Self Compassion	Self-Compassion Scale

- *HautKompass* is a highly accessible online intervention
- First of its kind available in the German language
- Program is **expected to reduce self-stigma through improving self-compassion and acceptance** in people with different visible chronic skin diseases
- Would be a substantial advancement of psychosocial care with the potential to greatly improve quality of life and well-being in dermatological patients