

# Use of biological agents in patients with chronic dermatoses at Hospital Umum Sarawak: A 13-year review

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** There has been a paradigm shift in the treatment of various chronic dermatoses using biological agents. We aim to describe the characteristics of patients with chronic dermatoses who receive biological treatment at Hospital Umum Sarawak (HUS). **Methods:** This was a retrospective study on the patients who received any form of biological treatment at Dermatology Clinic HUS between 2010 and July 2023. Medical records were retrieved and analyzed. **Results:** A total of 93 biological agents were prescribed to 78 patients. The mean age of the patients when first received the biological agent was 39.6 years (range: 3-82). The biologics funding resources include hospital medication fund (45.1%), public servant fund (37.6%), self-purchase (9.7%), patient familiarization program (7.5%) and clinical trial (1%). Psoriasis was the most common indication (80%), followed by atopic dermatitis (n = 8, 10.3%), chronic spontaneous urticaria (n=4, 5.1%), autoimmune blistering diseases (n=2, 2.3%), hidradenitis suppurativa and Netherton syndrome (1 each, 1.3% each). The most frequent agents used in psoriasis were IL17 inhibitors and anti-IL12/23. There were 33 (42.3%) patients who achieved meaningful with sustainable clinical response and were continued with the biological agents longer than 12 months (range: 14-114 months). Thirteen patients switched to another biological agent mainly due to loss of efficacy. Twelve patients stopped completely mainly due to primary failure and adverse events. The most severe adverse events reported were tuberculosis and hepatitis B reactivation. **Conclusion:** About 40% of patients had sustainable responses with the first biologics prescribed for more than a year.