Development and Validation of the Patient and Observer Scar Assessment Scale (POSAS) 3.0. by M.E. Carriere | L.B. Mokkink | A. Pijpe | H.C.W. de Vet | P.P.M. van Zuijlen | Burn center, Red Cross Hospital, Beverwijk, the Netherlands; Plastic, Reconstructive and Handsurgery & Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Amsterdam UMC, location VUmc, Amsterdam, the Netherlands | Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Amsterdam UMC, location VUmc, Amsterdam, the Netherlands | Burn center, Red Cross Hospital, Beverwijk, the Netherlands | Plastic, Reconstructive and Handsurgery, Amsterdam UMC, location VUmc, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Background: Measurements of scar quality are essential to evaluate the effectiveness of scar treatments and to monitor scars over time. The Patient and Observer Scar Assessment Scale (POSAS) measures both the patient and professional perspective on scar quality. Since its introduction in 2004, it has been translated into multiple languages and is now widely used. However, the POSAS needs further improvement. During the initial development of the POSAS, the content was determined without the input of patients or international experts. Moreover, previous quality testing of the POSAS suggested that the reliability of individual items could be improved, e.g. by adding better instructions, and that the response options (i.e. a 10-point scale) might be reduced without losing information.

Objective: Our goal is to develop the POSAS 3.0 for the assessment of scar quality in patients with scars of all phenotypes caused by surgery, burns, trauma, acne, and necrotizing fasciitis.

Methods: We have organized 5 focus groups in the Netherlands and 2 in Brisbane, Australia to explore which characteristics of scar quality matter the most to patients. To reach consensus among many scar experts on the content of the Observer Scale, we have performed an international Delphi study. Scar experts (i.e. Delphi panel members) were asked to fill in 3 different rounds of anonymous online questionnaires containing questions regarding the content of the Observer Scale.

Anticipated results: By involving patients in its development, the new POSAS will only include the items of scar quality that patients consider to be most important. By involving many international scar experts, we hope that the POSAS 3.0 will become a widely accepted
scar assessment scale that will not only improve the evaluation of treatment strategies, but also enhance the comparability of study results worldwide.