The objective of our study was to better understand the effects of Frontal Fibrosing Alopecia (FFA) on patients’ lives. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 patients with a diagnosis of FFA from the Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Department of Dermatology. A data dictionary and common coding system were created based on the literature. Our study builds upon the limited data available on this disease.10

Figure 1: Themes and illustrative quotes

**INTRODUCTION**
- **Frontal Fibrosing Alopecia (FFA)** is an immune-mediated scarring alopecia first described in 1994 that has increased in prevalence over the past thirty years.1
- It is predominantly limited to the frontotemporal hairline and affects the eyebrows in 80% of cases.2,3
- It mainly occurs in post-menopausal women and has been associated with hormonal, genetic, and environmental factors, although a definitive etiology remains unclear.4
- Both scarring (cicatrical) and non-scarring types of alopecia have a negative effect on patients’ overall quality of life (QOL).4–6
- Scarring alopecias potentially have greater psychological impact, leading to higher levels of anxiety and depression than non-scarring types.7
- Due to the chronicity, lack of approved treatments, and widespread involvement of both scalp and non-scalp hair, we predict FFA has a broad negative impact on participants’ lives.

**OBJECTIVE**
- The objective of our study was to better understand the effects of FFA on patients’ lives.

**METHODOLOGY**
We conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 patients with a diagnosis of FFA from the Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Department of Dermatology. A data dictionary and common coding system were created based on the transcrips of interviews, and codes were assigned to relevant text by the investigators.

**RESULTS**
Participants were a mean age of 66.9 years, 100% female, and had a mean age at diagnosis of 49.4 years. All participants had scalp involvement, and the majority of participants (78.6%) had eyebrow involvement. Our analysis elicited 8 themes (Figure 1).

**DISCUSSION**
- The cultural importance and value of hair has been pervasive throughout history.8
- Consequently, hair loss can be an extremely traumatic and impactful experience for individuals.9
- In our cohort, participants with FFA expressed the devastating effects of this progressive disease on many aspects of their lives.
- The etiology of FFA is not well understood, and this was distressing to participants in our study.
- Although FFA is now the most prevalent scarring alopecia, many physicians are still unfamiliar with the disease.10
- Misdiagnosis of scarring alopecia has been associated with increased rates of anxiety and depression, and increased severity of disease.11
- In our cohort, the amount of money participants were willing to pay for a one-time cure was considerably greater than for other chronic dermatological conditions such as psoriasis or rosacea.11,12

**CONCLUSION**
- Our study builds upon the limited data available on the effect of FFA on patients’ quality of life.
- FFA is associated with a large psychosocial burden.