**Abstract**

**Background**

*Mycobacterium Ulcerans* disease, is a rare skin disease which is prevalent in rural communities in the tropics mostly in Africa. Mortality rate is low, yet morbidity and consequent disabilities affect the quality of life of sufferers.

**Methods**

We used the grounded theory research approach to explore the experiences of people living with *Mycobacterium ulcerans* in a rural district in Ghana and provide a basis to understand the support needs of this group.

**Results**

The key support needs identified were: functional limitations, fear and frequency of the disease recurrence, contracture of limbs and legs, loss of sensation and numbness in the affected body area, lack of information from health professionals about self-care, feeling tired all the time, insomnia, lack of good diet, lack of access to prostheses, having to walk long distances to access health services and loss of educational opportunities.

**Conclusions**

The support needs of this vulnerable group were identified from a detailed analysis of how those living with BU coped with their lives. A key issue is the lack of education to assist self-management and prevent deterioration. Further research into the evaluation of interventions to address these support needs is needed including self-management strategies.

**Key words:** *MYCOBACTERIUM ULCERANS DISEASE*, BURULI ULCER, SUPPORT NEEDS, CONTRACTURE, EARLY DETECTION, SYSTEMIC DISEASE.