

EULAR Work Rehabilitation in People with RMDs study group

Aims and Objectives of the Study Group

Work provides a path to social inclusion and is important not only for the economy and the society but also for individual's health and well-being. Work instability is a mismatch between a person's abilities and that person's job demands, which, if unresolved, can result in work disability, the ceasing of work before retirement age and is common amongst the people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs). Participation in work is complex and multifactorial, therefore requires an inter-disciplinary and biopsychosocial approach to rehabilitation. Work rehabilitation, which is defined as a process to overcome the barriers people face when accessing, remaining or returning to work following illness, injury or impairment, can help people to remain and or return to work.

The overall aim of this study group is to bring together a multi-disciplinary team of expert health professionals, researchers, academics and patient partners with RMDs to encourage a cross-cultural and inter-disciplinary approach to support people with RMDs who are struggling to remain in work and/ or return to work due to the impact of RMDs on their work participation. The specific aims of this group are to:

- i. provide surveillance (through research projects, big data and clinical data collection) of work loss in people with RMDs
- ii. identify the key factors linked to work loss in older adults
- iii. identify the key approaches with a joined up biopsychosocial approach to reducing work loss in people with RMDs

The Study Group members meet at the annual EULAR meeting each year and work collaboratively throughout the year via e-mail correspondences and Skype / Tele-conferences to support collaborative bidding for grants to conduct multi-national studies and dissemination of findings from their local research amongst the EULAR Study Group membership to learn from best practice in work rehabilitation.

Founder Members

1. Dr Yeliz Prior, Occupational Therapist, United Kingdom, study group leader
2. Prof Alison Hammond, Occupational Therapist, United Kingdom
3. Dr Kanta Kumar, United Kingdom, United Kingdom
4. Dr Ross Wilkie, Physiotherapist, United Kingdom
5. Ms Anita Ash, Patient Research Partner, United Kingdom
6. Prof Jette Primdahl, Physiotherapist, Denmark
7. Dr Mari Klokke, Occupational Therapist, Norway
8. Dr Mathilda Bjork, Occupational Therapist, Sweden
9. Associate Prof Ann Bremander, Physiotherapist, Denmark and Sweden
10. Ms Hana Smucrova, Occupational Therapist, Czech Republic
11. Associate Prof Eda Tonga, Turkey