

EULAR Study Group for Public Health in RMDs

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The enormous burden of RMDs is not reflected in public health policy. The EU and EULAR have supported with financial grants the development of the European Information and Surveillance Network. “eumusc.net”, in short, has been designed to provide evidence to change priorities and evidence-based policy recommendations for the implementation of a Community strategy and by highlighting good practice so that it can be replicated across Europe.

The outputs of the project have been

- A report on Musculoskeletal Health in Europe 2012, with slide set and country fact sheets to support lobbying activities
- Recommendations for the surveillance of RMDs across Europe, with core indicators and assessment tool
- Patient Centred Standards for OA and RA
- Health Care Quality Indicators with audit tools to ensure that health providers are meeting the needs of people with RA and OA and delivering care to the agreed standard
- Analysis of barriers and facilitators to the implementation of Standards of Care
- Recommendations for achieving better implementation of Standards of Care, with examples of good practice.

eumusc.net has been undertaken by a network of collaborating centres. For this to make a difference to policy and implementation of standards of care across Europe, the work of the eumusc.net needs to continue and expand. Evidence needs to be continually provided to promote the highest standards of care of RMDs. This needs a forum of people whose focus is on improving musculoskeletal health in the population and the effective prevention and management of RMDs. This will be best served by the eumusc.net network of partners evolving into a EULAR Study Group for Public Health in RMDs. It will work closely with EULAR Public Affairs Group and PARE. It will include existing associates of the 22 member network and will be expanded to include all the EULAR countries.

Objectives

To provide a forum for developing strategies and actions to give the evidence-base for increased priority for RMDs resulting in better outcomes of care. Specifically, the Study Group will be responsible for:

- exchanging ideas and experiences as well as generating potential projects
- periodic review of the indicators of the impact of musculoskeletal conditions to ensure they are the most appropriate indicators and that they are comprehensive
- periodic review of Standards of Care and health care quality indicators and proposals to develop these for other musculoskeletal conditions where there is an identified need
- supporting audits on provision of care utilising HCQI
- identifying barriers to provision of high standards of care of RMDs and identifying facilitators to overcome them
- working with partners, national societies, and public health organisations to identify how evidence can be best used strategically to support advocacy and provide additional data.

Coordinator and current members

Anthony Woolf (Coordinator, UK), Till Uhlig (Norway), Ingemar Petersson (Sweden), Maarten de Wit (Netherlands), Josef Smolen (Austria), Tanya Stamm (Austria), Loreto Carmona (Spain), Estibaliz Loza (Spain), Rolf Greiff (Sweden), Florian Berghea (Romania), Marco Cimmino (Italy), Vliet Vlieland (Netherlands), Annelies Boonen (Netherlands), Francis Guillemin (France), Astrid Chorus (Netherlands) 1