‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ Campaign Toolkit

Toolkit overview

The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign, initiated by EULAR, aims to highlight that early diagnosis of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) and timely access to evidence-based treatment can prevent further damage and burden on the individual and society.

We need your help to make the campaign a success. By connecting everyone working in RMDs – health professionals associations, medical associations and patient groups – to work towards a united goal, ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ can build a strong platform to impress positive change for people with RMDs.

This toolkit provides an overview of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign and includes key guidance and materials to help you support the campaign and your patients.

We look forward to working with you on this exciting campaign. With your support and input, we can work together towards earlier diagnosis and access to treatment!

Toolkit contents

1. About EULAR
2. ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ overview
3. ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ key messages
4. Branding and artwork
5. ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ poster
6. Event guidance
7. World Arthritis Day
8. Useful contact information
1.0 About EULAR

The European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) is a pan-European, non-profit organisation which represents people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals in rheumatology and scientific societies of rheumatology across Europe.

EULAR aims to reduce the burden of RMDs on the individual and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of them. It promotes research advances and improved daily care for people with RMDs, and fights for governing bodies in Europe to recognise the needs of people with RMDs.

EULAR’s members include scientific societies (including medical societies), health professional associations, patient organisations, corporate members and people with RMDs across Europe.

For more information, please visit: www.eular.org

2.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’

An overview of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign, including:

- Campaign objectives
- How the campaign will be launched on a local and global level
- Activity timeline

2.1 What is ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’?

‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a Europe-wide and locally-implemented campaign that calls on people – including health professionals, medical doctors, the public, and policy-makers – to connect today for earlier diagnosis of RMDs and timely access to evidence-based treatment. The overall goal is to highlight RMDs as major diseases and a public health concern of pandemic proportions; whilst emphasising that early diagnosis and timely access to treatment can prevent further damage and burden on the individual as well as to society.

To help break down the barriers that delay early diagnosis, the integrated campaign activity will connect everyone working in RMDs, from medical doctors and health professionals associations to patient groups. Connecting together and communicating one united message, at a European and local level, provides a strong platform to impress change.

The campaign launch coincides with the 70th anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between health professionals, medical doctors and patients.
2.2 Campaign objectives

The objectives of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign are:

- To highlight the importance of early diagnosis of RMDs and timely access to evidence-based treatment in order to prevent further damage and burden on individuals and society
- To break down the barriers that delay early diagnosis. People often do not go to their doctor or health professional as soon as symptoms appear because society does not place sufficient value on joint care
- To help health professionals – via educational activities - to identify and treat diseases as early and appropriately as possible to avoid further damage (aligned with the School of Rheumatology)
- To highlight the EULAR Recommendations on early diagnosis and timely evidence-based treatment of RMDs
- To foster support for patients, so that they understand their individual needs for optimal diagnosis and management of RMDs

2.3 Campaign launch

Global launch

The global launch of ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ will take place on **14th June** in line with the EULAR Congress in Madrid. Professor Gerd R. Burmester, President of EULAR, will introduce the campaign to congress delegates during the EULAR Congress opening presentation.

This will be supported by further global activities, including an update to the existing EULAR website to include information about the campaign, and a press release.

National launches

The global launch will be supported by a number of national activities. Examples of national activities include the following:

**Lisbon Political Round Table**

To coincide with the PARE conference in Lisbon, the Portuguese League Against Rheumatism hosted a policy conference on the topic of early diagnosis in February. The aims of the event were:

- To raise awareness amongst politicians and decision makers of the importance of early diagnosis and access to care
- To provide evidence on cost-effectiveness of a national strategy of early intervention
- To highlight and strengthen the importance of the interdisciplinary network

The event was attended by politicians, journalists, medical doctors, patients and health professionals to help spread the message and discuss this important topic. There were a number of speakers to discuss early intervention from different aspects, with a chance for the audience to participate and ask questions.

*Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together*  
#ConnectToday
Madrid stunt

In Madrid, a pilot stunt will be held on 13th June at Madrid-Atocha railway station. It aims to highlight the importance of connecting in a timely manner by drawing an analogy with the idea of train connections and the consequences of not connecting in time. It is important to make your train connection, and even more important to connect with a medical doctor or health professional if you have health concerns.

The stunt will be hosted by Spanish patient organisation, LIRE, in collaboration with the Sociedad Española de Reumatología and the Spanish association of health professionals in rheumatology Open Reuma. It will be a great opportunity to engage with members of the general public to raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis, timely evidence-based treatment and the impact of RMDs on society. Educational materials will be distributed.

Multidisciplinary webinars

Two 1-hour multidisciplinary webinars (held from June), chaired by EULAR, will be open to all three EULAR pillars – health professional, scientific and patient communities. The webinar will be repeated (featuring the same content and speakers) to accommodate different time zones and allow maximum participation.

The webinars will discuss the importance of early diagnosis and early referral from a range of perspectives (health professionals, medical doctors and patient organisations). You will receive an official invite from EULAR with more details on these webinars. If you are not able to attend, the session will be available to download at a later date.

2.3 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign timeline

Please find below the key dates of this year’s campaign activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timings</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23-26 February:</td>
<td>PARE Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May:</td>
<td>Toolkit delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17 June:</td>
<td>EULAR Congress in Madrid, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o 14 June: ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign announced to congress delegates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June:</td>
<td>Multidisciplinary webinars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 October:</td>
<td>World Arthritis Day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ Key Messages

These key messages are for all EULAR health professional communities, which can be used when communicating on ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ or developing campaign activities, such as events. Please use these key messages in any presentations when discussing early diagnosis, early referral or the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign.

Key messages

- ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism) initiative, supported by all EULAR member networks, including scientific member societies, health professionals associations and PARE organisations, with the united goal of highlighting the importance of early diagnosis and timely access to evidence-based treatment.

- The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign educates the general public, health professionals, medical doctors and policy-makers about the importance of early diagnosis and timely access to evidence-based treatment in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs).

- Early diagnosis and access to treatment are key to preventing further damage from RMDs and reduce their burden on individuals and society. Health professionals play an important role in this diagnosis and treatment journey.
  - If treatment for rheumatoid arthritis is started within 12 weeks after the onset of symptoms, this could minimise the level of joint impact over time and increase the chances of remission1.
  - Fibromyalgia remains undiagnosed in as many as 3 out of 4 people with the condition. Time to diagnosis averages 5 years2.
  - Early intervention with information, exercise and weight reduction may reduce pain and disability caused by osteoarthritis, reduce the risk of comorbidity and need for joint replacement surgery3,4,5.

- Health professionals can increase:
  - levels of early diagnosis by referring patients with common RMD symptoms to medical doctors
  - use of evidence-based treatment, to avoid harm or delay caused by ineffective treatment methods

---

3 Altman RD. Early management of osteoarthritis. Am J Managed Care 2010;16:541-7

Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together
#ConnectToday
Supporting messages

- RMDs affect more than 120 million people in Europe alone – more individuals than any other disease group\(^6\)
- RMDs can affect people of all ages including children and babies and if not treated appropriately, daily activities such as walking, climbing stairs, cooking, personal hygiene and working are affected – reducing quality of life\(^7\)
- In the European Union, an extra one million employees could be at work each day if early interventions were more widely accessible for people with RMDs\(^8\)
- Ageing populations and increasing levels of obesity are contributing to rises in arthritic diseases\(^9\)
- The prevalence of clinical anxiety and depression in people with RMDs is about twice that seen in the general population\(^10\)
- The campaign launch coincides with the 70\(^{th}\) anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between medical doctors, health professionals and patients
- For more information, please visit the EULAR website: [www.eular.org](http://www.eular.org)

World Arthritis Day Key Messages

- World Arthritis Day is a global initiative, managed by EULAR, and forms part of the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign
- World Arthritis Day aims to bring people together to raise awareness of issues affecting those with RMDs and is recognised every year on 12 October
- For more information, please visit the website: [www.worldarthritisday.org](http://www.worldarthritisday.org)

---


\(^7\) 10 things you should know about rheumatic diseases fact sheet. EULAR. Available at: [https://www.eular.org/myUploadData/files/10%20things%20on%20RMD.pdf](https://www.eular.org/myUploadData/files/10%20things%20on%20RMD.pdf)

\(^8\) New study reveals intervention that could significantly reduce impact of one million EU workers needlessly off sick each day. Fit for Work Europe. Available at: [http://blog.fitforworkEurope.eu/2013/10/16/new-study-reveals-intervention-that-could-significantly-reduce-impact-of-one-million-eu-workers-needlessly-off-sick-each-day/](http://blog.fitforworkEurope.eu/2013/10/16/new-study-reveals-intervention-that-could-significantly-reduce-impact-of-one-million-eu-workers-needlessly-off-sick-each-day/)

\(^9\) Number of Adults with Arthritis Continues to Increase, CDC Reports. Fibromyalgia News Today. Available at: [https://fibromyalgianewstoday.com/2017/03/10/number-of-us-adults-with-arthritis-continues-to-increase-cdc-says/](https://fibromyalgianewstoday.com/2017/03/10/number-of-us-adults-with-arthritis-continues-to-increase-cdc-says/)

\(^10\) Geenen R et al. Psychological interventions for patients with rheumatic diseases and anxiety or depression. Best Practice & Research Clinical Rheumatology 2012;26:305–19
4.0 Branding and artwork

This section provides an outline of the designed materials you can use or adapt to support the campaign.

A campaign logo has been developed for use during the campaign, at events that you may wish to plan and in any presentations. The high resolution images and artwork files are available for you to adapt/translate.

Tip: the key messages are a great place to start when developing materials/presentations.

Campaign logo

Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together
#ConnectToday
5.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ poster

An educational poster has been developed providing an overview of the campaign key messages.

Artwork files are available for translation and adaptation, as part of this toolkit package.

Feel free to print this out and attach it to a wall in your clinic to aid discussions with patients.

There are over 200 different rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs), which affect people of all ages.

**Early diagnosis** and **timely access to evidence-based treatment** are key to preventing further damage from RMDs on individuals and society.

If RMD is suspected, referral to a specialist doctor must take place.

A number of specialists may be involved in RMD treatment:
- General Practitioners
- Rheumatologists
- and Medical Doctors from other specialties
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Nurses
- Pain Specialists
- Psychologists
- Podiatrists
- Social Workers

**Don’t Delay, Connect Today** with EULAR (www.EULAR.org) to find out more about RMDs and connect with local:
- PARE patient organisations
- Medical/scientific societies
- Health professional associations
- ...To help promote early diagnosis and referral

Patients have the right to be treated without delay, in accordance with the latest scientific advancements in RMDs.

#ConnectToday
6.0 Event guidance

This section provides guidance on how to plan campaign events, including examples of the type of events that you may wish to host.

To support ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’, you may wish to plan or support an event to help spread the campaign message among the RMD community, and wider.

We strongly encourage you to collaborate with other local health professional and medical communities and patient organisations when organising activities.

You can also contact your local PARE organisation to see if they are planning a public awareness event, and find out how you can support. You can find some guidance below on supporting or hosting an event in your country.

6.1 Supporting events hosted by your local PARE organisation

If your local PARE organisation is hosting a public awareness-raising event, there are several ways you can support from a health professional perspective:

1. Contact your local PARE organisation to find out if they have any plans
2. Attend kick-off meetings to discuss how you can collaborate on early diagnosis activities or those related to timely access to evidence-based treatment
3. Share relevant research data on early diagnosis which you have that may be useful for your local PARE organisations to know when developing event materials
4. Consider acting as a scientific spokesperson for events and media enquiries

6.2 Considerations when hosting your own event

You can find some guidance below on what to consider when organising an event.

- You may wish to hold an event to discuss early diagnosis and referral of RMDs in your country, such as a roundtable event or conference with key figures from the RMD community in attendance
  - You may wish to share recent research findings and relevant statistics on early diagnosis
- Invite politicians, journalists, patient representatives, health professionals and medical doctors to join the event to discuss the burden of RMDs and the importance of early diagnosis
- Include keynote speakers to cover topics such as the importance of early diagnosis and access to care, as well as an opportunity for the audience to ask questions
- You may wish to focus events on a specific topic or condition, or more widely on the early diagnosis of all RMDs
As part of your event, you may wish to host a workshop activity or breakout, during which attendees form smaller groups to participate in brainstorming or discussions (consider space available for this)

If you are already participating in an event you may consider the addition of a multidisciplinary panel discussion on the burden of RMDs and the importance of early diagnosis and timely access to evidence-based treatment

- See section 2.3 for an example of how this worked in Lisbon, Portugal

Timing of your event

The global campaign launch will take place at the EULAR congress (on 14th June), alongside the local Spanish launch. We recommend hosting your local event to coincide with a milestone for greater impact, such as World Arthritis Day or a national awareness day.

The time of day that the event takes place is also important – for a roundtable event or a conference, ensure your key guests and speakers can all attend.

Inviting people to take part in your event

Think about the key figures from the RMD community you would like to attend. Speakers will need to be approached in advance, so think about who you would like to speak at your event, as well as how many speakers you would like to have.

You can invite people by email or letter providing the following details:

- Location, date and time of the event
- An agenda for the meeting
- Details on the dress code (if required)
- RSVP details including your contact details and request for their details

Please feel free to use the campaign logo on your materials.
7.0 World Arthritis Day

*This section provides information on the World Arthritis Day activity for 2017, and how this fits into the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign.*

World Arthritis Day (WAD) is a global initiative bringing people together to raise awareness of issues affecting people with all forms of RMDs – from well-known conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis to less well-recognised RMDs such as fibromyalgia. WAD is recognised every year on 12 October. WAD forms part of the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign.

The aims of WAD are:
- To raise awareness of RMDs amongst the medical community, people with RMDs and the general public
- To influence public policy by making decision-makers aware of the burden of RMDs and the steps which can be taken to ease them
- To ensure all people with RMDs and their caregivers are aware of the vast support network available to them

Central to World Arthritis Day efforts will be the development and sharing of our campaign video.

The video will encourage people to make earlier connections with their health professional and medical doctor and further highlight the importance of early diagnosis and the right treatment. This video will launch on 12 October on the WAD website and social media channels and will be shared with you for use in local activities (under embargo until 12 October).

Consider hosting ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ events on or around World Arthritis Day, as this is a great platform to help generate awareness.

Please do let us know of any campaign activity that you plan so that we can support it from the official WAD Facebook and Twitter channels, as well as the website.
8.0 Useful Contact Information

Below are a list of useful contacts. Please do reach out to us if you have any queries about the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign or how you can support it.

Maria Batziou, EULAR Secretariat
Project Coordinator
Tel: +30 694 623 2776
Email: Maria.Batziou@eular.org

Birte Gluesing, EULAR Secretariat
Project Manager
Tel: +49 228 962 12 83
Email: Birte.Gluesing@eular.org

Lydia Tchambaz, EULAR Secretariat
Deputy Executive Director
Tel: +41 44 716 30 33
Email: Lydia.Tchambaz@eular.org

Ursula Aring, EULAR Secretariat
Communications Manager
Tel: +41 44 716 30 38
Email: Ursula.Aring@eular.org

Christina Opava, Professor at
Karolinska Institutet
Tel: +46 8524 888 80
Email: Christina.opava@ki.se

Thank you for all your support!

We look forward to working with you throughout 2017 and beyond to help raise awareness of early diagnosis and improve the lives of those with RMDs.
‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ Campaign Toolkit

Toolkit overview

The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign, initiated by EULAR, aims to highlight that early diagnosis of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) and timely access to evidence-based treatment can prevent further damage and burden on the individual and society.

We need your help to make the campaign a success. By connecting everyone working in RMDs – from patient groups, to physician associations and health professional associations – to work towards a united goal, ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ can build a strong platform to impress positive change for people with RMDs.

This toolkit provides an overview of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign and includes key guidance and materials to help you get involved and launch activities in your country. You can also find information about how World Arthritis Day activities can be incorporated into the wider campaign.

We look forward to working with you on this exciting campaign. With your support and input, we can work together towards earlier diagnosis and access to treatment!

Toolkit contents

1.0 About EULAR
2.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’
3.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ key messages
4.0 Branding and artwork
5.0 How to work with the media
6.0 Event guidance
7.0 Social media guidance
8.0 World Arthritis Day
9.0 Useful contact information
10.0 Appendix
1.0 About EULAR

The European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) is a pan-European, non-profit organisation which represents people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals in rheumatology and scientific societies of rheumatology across Europe.

EULAR aims to reduce the burden of RMDs on the individual and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of them. It promotes the translation of research advances into improved daily care for people with RMDs, and fights for governing bodies in Europe to recognise the needs of people with RMDs.

EULAR’s members include scientific societies, health professional associations, patient organisations, corporate members and people with RMDs across Europe.

2017 marks the 70th anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between physicians, health professionals and patients.

For more information, please visit: www.eular.org
2.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’

An overview of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign, including:

- Campaign objectives
- How the campaign will be launched on a local and global level
- Activity timeline

2.1 What is ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’?

‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a Europe-wide and locally-implemented campaign that calls on people – including the public, physicians, health professionals and policy-makers - to connect early for earlier diagnosis of RMDs and timely access to evidence-based treatment. The overall goal is to highlight RMDs as major diseases and a public health concern of pandemic proportions and that early diagnosis and timely access to treatment can prevent further damage and burden on the individual and society.

To help break down the barriers that delay early diagnosis, the integrated campaign activity will connect everyone working in RMDs, from patient groups to physician and health professional associations. Connecting together and communicating one united message, at a European and local level, provides a strong platform to impress change.

The campaign launch coincides with the 70th anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between physicians, health professionals and patients.

2.2 Campaign objectives

The objectives of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign are:

- To highlight the importance of early diagnosis of RMDs and access to treatment in order to prevent further damage and burden on individuals and society
- To break down the barriers that delay early diagnosis. People often do not go to a physician or health professional as soon as symptoms appear because society does not place sufficient value on joint care
- To educate the general public that there are many different aspects of RMDs, that affect more than 120 million people in Europe alone
- To raise awareness that RMDs can occur at any age – children and young people can be severely affected
2.3 Campaign launch

Global launch

The global launch of ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ will take place on 14th June 2017 in line with the EULAR congress in Madrid. Professor Gerd R. Burmester, President of EULAR, will introduce the campaign to congress delegates during the EULAR Congress opening presentation.

Information about the campaign will be included on the EULAR website.

National launches

National activities are key to the success of the campaign. We need your help to make an impact on a local level!

Below are some examples to help give you an idea of how you can implement the campaign in your country.

Public-facing awareness stunt

- Hosting a stunt activity in a public place will grab attention and therefore is a great way to raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis amongst the general public
- The general public are a key audience for this campaign as it is vital that they speak to a physician or health professional at the onset of any symptoms
- You can alert local media about the activity to generate local media coverage
- You can promote your event on social media
- See section 5.0 for an example of a public event taking place in Madrid

Health professional/physician/political event

- Hosting a conference or roundtable event to engage key stakeholders
- This could include keynote speakers to cover topics such as the importance of early diagnosis and access to care, as well as an opportunity for the audience to ask questions
- You may wish to invite politicians, journalists, physicians and health professionals to join the event
- See section 5.0 for an example of how this worked in Lisbon, Portugal

A series of monthly webinars (from June – October) will take place for all PARE organisations, in which case studies and best practice examples of successful campaign activity will be shared. We welcome you to share your case study and learnings to inspire others!
2.4 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign timeline

Please find below the key dates of this year’s campaign activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>23-26 February</strong>: PARE Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>March</strong>: Toolkit delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13 June</strong>: ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ public-facing activity at Madrid Atocha train station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14-17 June</strong>: EULAR Congress in Madrid, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o <strong>14 June</strong>: ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign announced to congress delegates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>June–October</strong>: Monthly webinars with PARE groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End August / early September</strong>: Campaign video – for more details refer to page 14 – to be shared with PARE organisations with embargo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 October</strong>: World Arthritis Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 October</strong>: Campaign video to be launched on the WAD website and EULAR/WAD social channels and to be shared widely by PARE community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ Key Messages

These key messages are prepared wording, for all EULAR member organisations of PARE, which can be used as a basis when developing materials about your ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ activities, such as website updates, leaflets, media materials and social media content. They can also be used when talking to media. When little time or space is available, the key messages should be prioritised above the supporting messages.

**Key messages**

- The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign aims to educate the general public, physicians, health professionals, and policy-makers about the importance of early diagnosis and timely access to evidence-based treatment in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs)
- Early diagnosis and timely access to treatment are key to preventing further damage from RMDs and burden on individuals and society
- For example, if pharmacological treatment for rheumatoid arthritis is started within 12 weeks after the onset of symptoms, this could minimise the level of joint impact over time and increase the chances of remission¹
- In the European Union, an extra one million employees could be at work each day if early interventions were more widely accessible for people with RMDs²
- ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism) initiative, uniting the voices of PARE organisations, scientific member societies, and health professional associations, with the united goal of highlighting the importance of early diagnosis and access to treatment

**Supporting messages**

- The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign launch coincides with the 70th anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between physicians, health professionals and patients
- Early intervention with information, exercise and weight reduction may reduce pain and disability caused by osteoarthritis, reduce the risk of comorbidity and the need for joint replacement surgery³⁴
- Fibromyalgia remains undiagnosed in as many as 3 out of 4 people with the condition. Diagnosis time averages 5 years⁵

---

⁵ Arnold, L.M., Clauw, D.J. et al., Improving the Recognition and Diagnosis of Fibromyalgia. (2011) 86(5): 457-464
• RMDs affect more than 120 million people in Europe alone – more individuals than any other disease group\(^6\)
• RMDs can affect people of all ages including children and babies and if not treated appropriately, daily activities such as walking, climbing stairs, cooking and personal hygiene and working are affected – reducing quality of life and impacting on physical abilities\(^7\)
• The prevalence of clinical anxiety and depression in those with RMDs is about twice that seen in the general population\(^8\)
• For more information, please visit the EULAR website: [www.eular.org](http://www.eular.org)

**World Arthritis Day messages**

• World Arthritis Day is a global initiative, managed by EULAR, and forms part of the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign
• World Arthritis Day aims to bring people together to raise awareness of issues affecting people with RMDs and is recognised every year on 12 October
• For more information, please visit the website: [www.worldarthritisday.org](http://www.worldarthritisday.org)

---


\(^7\) 10 things you should know about rheumatic diseases fact sheet. EULAR. Available at: [http://www.eular.org/myUploadData/files/10%20things%20on%20RMD.pdf](http://www.eular.org/myUploadData/files/10%20things%20on%20RMD.pdf)

4.0 Branding and artwork

An outline of the designed materials you can adapt to promote the campaign

A campaign logo, educational flyer and t-shirt template have been developed for use at your events, online and in any materials. The high resolution images and artwork files are available for you to adapt/translate your materials.

Tip: the key messages are a great place to start when developing copy for materials.

Educational flyer

DO YOU HAVE JOINT PAIN, STIFFNESS AND FEEL EXHAUSTED?

DON’T DELAY CONNECT TODAY

www.eular.org

www.facebook.com/eular.org
@eular_org
The first step in managing any disease is **knowing the symptoms**. Persistent joint and muscle pain, extreme fatigue, stiffness and depression are all symptoms of **Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases (RMDs)**.

**WHAT ARE RHEUMATIC AND MUSCULOSKELETAL DISEASES?**

- The term **Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Disease (RMD)** encompasses a wide range of conditions, from rheumatoid arthritis and lupus to fibromyalgia and gout.
- **RMDs affect over 120 million people** in Europe alone. They affect women and men of **all ages** including children and babies.  
- Early diagnosis is key to preventing further damage, but RMDs often receive delayed or no diagnosis.
- If not treated appropriately, daily activities are affected – reducing quality of life and impacting on physical abilities.
- Make sure you speak to your doctor about any concerns.

1. ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism) initiative, supported by all EULAR member networks, including RAKE organisations, scientific member societies, and health professionals associations, with the united goal of highlighting the importance of early diagnosis and access to treatment and care.

---

**Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together**

#ConnectToday
Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together

#ConnectToday
Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together
#ConnectToday
5.0 Event guidance

This section provides guidance on how to plan campaign events, including an overview of events that have been planned as case study examples.

Planning a ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ event will help to spread the campaign message among the general public and across the RMD community. Below, you will find two examples of events that the Spanish PARE group, LIRE, and the Portuguese League Against Rheumatism are planning, to raise awareness in their country. You can use these examples as inspiration when planning and hosting your own event.

We strongly encourage collaboration between patient organisations and local scientific and health professional communities for activities.

5.1 Event case studies

Madrid stunt

In Madrid, a stunt will be held on 13th June, at Madrid-Atocha railway station. It aims to highlight the importance of connecting in a timely manner and the consequences of not connecting in time by drawing similarities with the idea of train connections: it is important to make your train connection, and even more important to connect with a health professional if you have health concerns.

The stunt will be hosted by Spanish patient organisation, LIRE, in collaboration with the Sociedad Española de Reumatología and the Spanish association of health professionals in rheumatology Open Reuma. It will be a great opportunity to engage with members of the general public.

Educational materials will be distributed, and the stunt will feature free screenings with rheumatologists and health professionals for the public.

Lisbon Political Round Table

To coincide with the PARE conference, the Portuguese League Against Rheumatism will host a policy conference on the topic of early diagnosis. The aims of the event are:

- To raise awareness amongst politicians and decision makers of the importance of early diagnosis and access to care
- To provide evidence on cost-effectiveness of a national strategy of early intervention
- To highlight and strengthen the importance of the interdisciplinary network

A template roundtable agenda can be found here.
There will be a number of speakers to discuss early intervention from different perspectives, with a chance for the audience to participate and ask questions. The event will be attended by politicians, journalists, physicians, people with RMDs and health professionals.

2. Hosting your own event

You can find some guidance below on how to organise an event.

1. Hold a kick-off meeting with local health professional/physician networks

This will help you brainstorm ideas and work collaboratively to organise your event.

2. Decide what type of event you want to hold

You can organise a pre-announced event or a surprise event, similar to the stunt that will be launching the campaign in Madrid. Alternatively you may wish to hold an event to discuss policies around RMDs, such as a roundtable event with key figures from the RMD community in attendance.

3. Decide when to hold your event

The global campaign launch will take place at the EULAR congress, the Spanish launch will take place at the same time. We recommend hosting your local event to coincide with a milestone for greater impact, such as World Arthritis Day or a national awareness day.

The time of day that the event takes place is also important – for a public-facing event, you want to choose a time when there will be a lot of people in your venue/location. If you are holding your event in a train station, for example, choose a time when there is a high level of commuters. For a roundtable event or a conference, you want to ensure your key guests and speakers can all attend.

4. Decide where to hold your event

Public-facing event

If you are planning a public-facing event, your event location should be:

- A public place – ideally a town square, public transport station, shopping centre, sports venue or park
- Somewhere where there is likely to be a large public presence. The more people see your activity, the more awareness we can raise for RMDs
- In a place where there is no danger to participants from roads, obstacles, or areas that people could fall into
Suitable for all ages – if children are taking part, make sure that responsible adults/parents/teachers are present and permission is received, including for any filming/photography

Health professional/physician/political event

If you are planning a roundtable event or conference, your event location should be:

- A meeting room, conference hall, or something similar
- In a place where there is space for speakers to stand and for an audience - consider whether your audience will be sitting round a conference table (roundtable event) or in an auditorium style

LOCATION TIPS

When planning the location, consider the following:

- Are there any safety concerns with the area?
- Will you block any emergency exits?
- Can the location support any audio visual (AV) equipment required?
- Are there electricity sockets available for music appliances, if needed?
- Which authority do you need to seek permission from to hold the event (if any)?
- Do the local police/businesses need to be informed of the event?
- Do you have the relevant insurance to cover the event?
- Is the location suitably lit for your event?
- Is there adequate space for your event?
- Remember to contact the venue or organization responsible for the location beforehand for approval

5. Invite people to take part in your event

Public-facing event

Identify some people who may be interested in volunteering support, for example developing a video of the event, taking photographs etc. You might want to start with your close patient network and people who have been engaged in previous events. However, you could also ask family and friends, local community groups, and local schools and universities. Make sure you also take the opportunity to talk about your plans at conferences and meetings, inviting any interested attendees to get involved.

Create a Facebook event page and invite people to it. You can also invite people by email, letter and text message. The invitation should be short, clear and concise and provide the following details:

- Location, date and time of the event
- Details on the dress code (if required)
- Ask participants to RSVP with their contact details, so that you can send them reminders and updates about the event and campaign
- Your contact details for the day so that people can get in touch

**Health professional/physician/political event**

Think about the key figures from the RMD community you would like to attend. Speakers will need to be approached in advance, so think about who you would like to speak at your event, as well as how many speakers you would like to have.

You can invite people by email. The invitation should be short, clear and concise and provide the following details:

- Location, date and time of the event
- An agenda for the meeting
- Details on the dress code (if required)
- Ask participants to RSVP with their contact details, so that you can send them reminders and updates about the event and campaign
- Your contact details for the day so that people can get in touch

**6. Tell the press**

**Pre-event:**

- If you are hosting a public-facing event, get in touch with as many local news sources/journalists (including print, online and broadcast/TV) as possible to invite them to your event
- For a policy meeting, you may wish to invite a few policy/health journalists
- Send the media an email about the event and follow up with a phone call to see if they would like to attend

**On the day:**

- Send a press release, information about the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign and some photos to your media list (including media that attend and those that cannot attend the actual event).

If your photos/videos include children, don’t forget to seek parental permission before sharing and publishing the photos/videos.
6.0 How to work with the media

This section provides guidance on how to work with the media, including advice on developing press releases and creating cases studies for media outreach.

Securing media coverage is a great medium to communicate the importance of early diagnosis and timely access to evidence-based treatment of RMDs. For any type of event you are hosting, media support can play a vital role in generating awareness of the event and its aims. We encourage you to use a combination of traditional and social media activity (see section 7.0) to raise awareness of your local ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ activities.

6.1 Developing press releases

To engage with media, you may wish to develop a short press release about your ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign activity. This is also a useful way to drive attendance at the event, if shared in advance.

Consider which journalists are most appropriate for your planned activity, for example, a public facing stunt is a great opportunity to engage consumer media, but a political roundtable will be of more interest to political and healthcare-specific media.

When writing your press release, the below guidance provides some useful tips to make sure you include the relevant information to the media:

PLEASE NOTE:

Points 1 and 2 are extremely important, as journalists are likely to only read the headline and the first paragraph of a press release.

1. The headline should be snappy, engaging and newsworthy
2. The first paragraph should outline the essence of your story and key details of your activity/event, such as ‘who, what, why, how, where and when’

Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together

#ConnectToday
3. If the aim of the press release is to encourage public engagement, reiterate why they should get involved

4. Use the next paragraph to provide more detail and background about RMDs and early diagnosis. Facts and figures can be found in the campaign key messages. You should also include facts and figures from your country, where possible

5. Include quotes from key spokespeople to bring the facts in your story to life

6. Highlight that your local activity is part of a European-wide initiative, ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’. Provide information about the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign

7. Conclude with a ‘call to action’, to reinforce the importance of early diagnosis and access to treatment

8. Underneath the main body of your press release, you can include a section called ‘Notes to Editors’. This could include the following paragraphs:
   - ‘About Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ – Example wording can be found in the ‘EULAR 2017 campaign: Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ section
   - ‘About [name of your organisation]’ – Include information about your organisation, its website address and contact details
   - ‘About EULAR’ – wording can be found in the ‘About EULAR’ section

6.2 Securing case studies relating to early diagnosis

To help bring your campaign to life, you could offer journalists the opportunity to interview somebody that is affected by an RMD and has a story about early diagnosis. Personal stories are much more likely to get press coverage compared to simply stating the facts about an event or activity. If a journalist does wish to conduct an interview it is important that you brief your interviewees thoroughly beforehand – ask them to provide answers with a positive ‘call to action’ alongside their personal experience. To make sure your interviewee is comfortable, it is very important that you ask them if they are happy to take part in the interview. It also helps to provide them with some examples of the questions they could be asked, such as:

- When did you begin to notice symptoms of an RMD?
- When were you diagnosed with an RMD?
- How did the timing of your diagnosis affect your experience of having an RMD?
- How does having an RMD affect your quality of life?
- How do initiatives like ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ help the RMD community?
- How do you believe early diagnosis benefits people with RMDs?
- What action would you like to see the public take in terms of RMD diagnosis, awareness and management?
- What action would you like to see politicians take in terms of promoting the early diagnosis of RMDs, and RMD management?
7.0 Social media

This section provides guidance on developing social media content to promote the campaign, including social media content calendars and live videos.

We strongly recommend leveraging your social media channels. Facebook in particular is a powerful platform and will help to spread the message of the campaign and engage the RMD community.

All social media content related to ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’, should use the hashtag #ConnectToday.

Creating a content calendar will help you plan your social media activities in advance and ensure you are sharing posts on a regular basis. Setting up a social media content calendar is easy:

- Develop an excel spreadsheet or Word document plotting out the days in each month
- Develop a social media post(s) for each day or for three times a week and set a time that you plan to send it out
- There are lots of ways you can make sure your posts are diverse, like discussing different themes on different days of the week. For example: Monday = key facts and statistics about RMDs and early diagnosis, Tuesday = Top Tips Tuesday, Wednesday = motivational posts
- Make sure you increase your social media efforts during peak campaign times. Schedule more posts in the week of the launch of ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ and around World Arthritis Day on 12 October
- Think about what images and videos you want to include in your posts. Images and videos are far more likely to catch attention
- You can include website links in your posts to share information from other organisations – this will help educate the social media community further about RMDs and the importance of early diagnosis
Some examples of teaser social media posts you may wish to adapt ahead of the launch of the campaign are:

- Early diagnosis of RMDs is important to prevent further impact and damage! #ConnectToday
- How long had you experienced RMD symptoms before seeing your health professional or physician? Comment below...

Once the campaign has launched, you may wish to post directly about the campaign, for example:

- We are calling on YOU to help raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis of RMDs. Share this post to show your support! #ConnectToday
- Early diagnosis is crucial to help prevent further impact of RMDs. Don’t delay, connect with your health professional as early as possible! #ConnectToday

You can even host a live video from your event, for example, a ‘Facebook Live’ on Facebook, or a live video on Twitter.

- Live videos are streamed through your social media channel (Facebook or Twitter) and will be shown to anyone who follows your page
- You can ‘go live’ anywhere, at any time. We recommend putting together a plan, and thinking about who/what you would want to feature. It is important to gain permissions and put together a briefing document for people involved. You may also want to create a brief script or talking points for people to follow
- For more information on Facebook live, visit: https://live.fb.com/golive/
- For more information on going live on Twitter, visit: https://support.twitter.com/articles/20175092
8.0 World Arthritis Day

World Arthritis Day (WAD) is a global initiative bringing people together to raise awareness of issues affecting people with all forms of RMDs – from well-known conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis to less well-recognized RMDs such as fibromyalgia. WAD is recognised every year on 12 October. WAD forms part of the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign.

The aims of WAD are:
- To raise awareness of RMDs amongst the medical community, people with RMDs and the general public
- To influence public policy by making decision-makers aware of the burden of RMDs and the steps which can be taken to ease them
- To ensure all people with RMDs and their caregivers are aware of the vast support network available to them

Central to World Arthritis Day efforts will be the development and sharing of our campaign video. The video will encourage people to make earlier connections with their health professional and further highlight the importance of early diagnosis and the right treatment. This will launch on 12 October on the WAD website and social media channels and will be shared with you for use in local activities (under embargo until 12 October).

Consider hosting ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ events on or around World Arthritis Day, as this is a great platform to help generate awareness. More information on how to engage with the media can be found in section 5.0, and more information on using social media to support your campaign can be found in section 7.0.

Please do let us know of any campaign activity that you plan so that we can support it from the official WAD Facebook and Twitter channels, as well as the website.
9.0 Useful Contact Information

Below are a list of useful contacts. Please do reach out to us if you have any queries when planning and launching your ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign.

**Maria Batziou, EULAR Secretariat**
Project Coordinator

Tel: +30 694 623 2776
Email: Maria.Batziou@eular.org

**Birte Gluesing, EULAR Secretariat**
Project Manager

Tel: +49 228 962 12 83
Email: Birte.Gluesing@eular.org

**Lydia Tchambaz, EULAR Secretariat**
Deputy Executive Director

Tel: +41 44 716 30 33
Email: Lydia.Tchambaz@eular.org

**Ursula Aring, EULAR Secretariat**
Communications Manager

Tel: +41 44 716 30 38
Email: Ursula.Aring@eular.org

Thank you for all your support!

We look forward to working with you throughout 2017 and beyond to help raise awareness of early diagnosis and improve the lives of those with RMDs.
10.0 Appendix

i. Template agenda for Lisbon political roundtable

- 09:30 – 10:00: Registration/Welcome coffee
- 10:00 – 10:05: Welcome / introduction at the conference - Moderator
- 10:05 – 10:10: Welcome Speech
- 10:10 – 10:25: European management approach on early referral
- 10:25 – 10:40: The role of Health Professionals in early diagnosis
- 10:40 – 10:55: Early referral to Rheumatology in Portugal
- 10:55 – 11:10: Health Economy of RMDs
- 11:10 – 11:25: Governmental approach to tackle burden of RMDs in Portugal
- 11:25 – 11:40: What should be done
- 2mins reflection of key messages of each presentation
- 11:40 – 12:20: Round table
- 12:20 – 12:30: Closing Remarks, summary of achieved objectives
‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ Campaign Toolkit

Scientific Community

Toolkit overview

The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign, initiated by EULAR, aims to highlight that early diagnosis of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) and access to treatment can prevent further damage and burden on the individual and society.

We need your help to make the campaign a success. By connecting everyone working in RMDs – from scientific associations and health professionals, to patient groups – to work towards a united goal, ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ can build a strong platform to impress positive change for people with RMDs.

This toolkit provides an overview of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign and includes key guidance and materials to help you support the campaign and your patients.

We look forward to working with you on this exciting campaign. With your support and input, we can work together towards earlier diagnosis and access to treatment!

Toolkit contents

1. About EULAR
2. ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ overview
3. ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ key messages
4. Branding and artwork
5. “Don’t Delay, Connect Today” Early Diagnosis Resource guide
6. RMDs wall chart
7. Event guidance
8. World Arthritis Day
9. Useful contact information
1.0 About EULAR

The European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) is a pan-European, non-profit organisation which represents people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals and scientific societies of rheumatology across Europe.

EULAR aims to reduce the burden of rheumatic diseases on the individual and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of RMDs. It promotes research advances and improved daily care for people with RMDs, and fights for governing bodies in Europe to recognise the needs of people with RMDs.

EULAR’s members include scientific societies, health professionals, patient organisations, corporate members and people with RMDs across Europe.

For more information, please visit: [www.eular.org](http://www.eular.org)
2.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’

An overview of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign, including:

- Campaign objectives
- How the campaign will be launched on a local and global level
- Activity timeline

2.1 What is ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’?

‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a Europe-wide and locally-implemented campaign that calls on people – including rheumatologists, health professionals, the public, and policy-makers - to connect early for earlier diagnosis of RMDs and access to treatment. The overall goal is to highlight RMDs as major diseases and a public health concern of pandemic proportions and that early diagnosis and access to treatment can prevent further damage and burden on the individual and society.

To help break down the barriers that delay early diagnosis, the integrated campaign activity will connect everyone working in RMDs, from scientific and health professional associations to patient groups. Connecting together and communicating one united message, at a European and local level, provides a strong platform to impress change.

The campaign launch coincides with the 70th anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between physicians, health professionals and patients.

2.2 Campaign objectives

The objectives of the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign are:

- To highlight the importance of early diagnosis of RMDs and access to treatment in order to prevent further damage and burden on individuals and society
- To help scientific communities to identify and treat diseases as early and intensely as possible to avoid further damage (to be aligned with the School of Rheumatology)
- To highlight the EULAR Recommendations on early diagnosis of RMDs
- To break down the barriers that delay early diagnosis. People often do not go to health professionals as soon as symptoms appear because society does not place sufficient value on joint care
- To foster support for patients, so that they understand their individual needs for optimal diagnosis and management of RMDs
2.3 Campaign launch

Global launch

The global launch of ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ will take place on 14th June in line with the EULAR congress in Madrid. Professor Gerd R. Burmester, President of EULAR, will introduce the campaign to congress delegates during the EULAR Congress opening presentation.

This will be supported by further global activities, including an update to the existing EULAR website to include information about the campaign, and a press release.

National launches

The global launch will be supported by a number of national activities. Examples of national activities include the following:

Lisbon Political Round Table

To coincide with the PARE conference in Lisbon, the Portuguese League Against Rheumatism hosted a policy conference on the topic of early diagnosis this February. The aims of the event were:

- To raise awareness amongst politicians and decision makers of the importance of early diagnosis and access to care
- To provide evidence on cost-effectiveness of a national strategy of early intervention
- Strengthen the interdisciplinary network

The event was attended by politicians, journalists, and health professionals to help spread the message and discuss this important topic. There were a number of speakers to discuss early intervention from different aspects, with a chance for the audience to participate and ask questions.

Madrid stunt

In Madrid, a pilot stunt will be held on 13th June, at Madrid-Atocha railway station. It aims to highlight the importance of connecting in a timely manner and the consequences of not connecting in time by drawing similarities with the idea of train connections. It is important to make your train connection, and even more important to connect with a health professional if you have health concerns.

The stunt will be hosted by Spanish patient organisation, LIRE, in collaboration with the scientific association, Sociedad Española de Reumatología, and Open Reuma. It will be a great opportunity to engage with members of the general public to raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis and the impact of RMDs on society. Educational materials will be distributed at the stunt.
**Multidisciplinary webinars**

Two multidisciplinary webinars (held between March and May) will take place for those from all three EULAR pillars – health professionals, scientific and patient communities.

Each webinar will be 1 hour long, over WebEx, featuring the same content and speakers, and will be chaired by EULAR. The two webinars will take place at different times to allow participation per time zones.

The webinars will discuss the importance of early diagnosis and early referral from a range of perspectives (health professionals, scientific and patient). You will receive an official invite from EULAR with more details on these webinars. If you are not able to attend, the session will be available to download at a later date.

**2.3 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign timeline**

Please find below the key dates of this year’s campaign activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>March</strong>: Toolkit delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>March-April</strong>: Multidisciplinary webinars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14-17 June</strong>: EULAR Congress in Madrid, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 14 June: ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign announced to congress delegates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Publication of ‘EULAR Recommendations on the early diagnosis of RMDs’ (TBC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 October</strong>: World Arthritis Day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.0 ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ Key Messages

These key messages are prepared wording, for all scientific communities, which can be used when communicating on ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ or developing campaign activities, such as events. When little time or space is available, the key messages should be prioritised above the supporting messages.

Key messages

- The ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign aims to educate the general public, health professionals, and policy-makers about the importance of early diagnosis and access to treatment in rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs)
- Early diagnosis and access to treatment are key to preventing further damage from RMDs and burden on individuals and society
  - For example, if treatment for Rheumatoid Arthritis is started within 12 weeks after the onset of symptoms, this could minimise the level of joint impact over time and increase the chances of remission
  - Fibromyalgia remains undiagnosed in as many as 3 out of 4 people with the condition. Diagnosis time averages 5 years
  - Early diagnosis and treatment of psoriatic arthritis is associated with improved outcomes for patients
  - The prevalence of clinical anxiety and depression in those with RMDs is about twice that seen in the general population
- ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ is a EULAR (European League Against Rheumatism) initiative, supported by all EULAR member networks, including scientific member societies, health professional associations and PARE organisations, with the united goal of highlighting the importance of early diagnosis and access to treatment

Supporting messages

- Prevalent cases of rheumatoid arthritis are expected to increase by 2035, primarily due to aging populations

---

3 Kirkham, B, de Vlam K et al., Early treatment of psoriatic arthritis is associated with improved patient-reported outcomes: findings from the etanercept PRESTA trial. (2015) 33(1): 11-9
5 The prevalent population of this debilitating, chronic condition will increase in all markets over the next 20 years. Casey Godbout. (2016): 17
• RMDs affect more than 120 million people in Europe alone – more individuals than any other disease group\(^6\)
• RMDs can affect people of all ages including children and babies and if not treated appropriately, daily activities such as walking, climbing stairs, cooking and personal hygiene and working are affected – reducing quality of life and impacting on physical abilities\(^7\)
• In the European Union, an extra one million employees could be at work each day if early interventions were more widely accessible for people with RMDs\(^8\)
• The campaign launch coincides with the 70\(^{th}\) anniversary of EULAR, marking 70 years of research and the collaboration between physicians, health professionals and patients
• For more information, please visit the EULAR website: [www.eular.org](http://www.eular.org)

**World Arthritis Day Key Messages**

• World Arthritis Day is a global initiative, managed by EULAR, and forms part of the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign
• World Arthritis Day aims to bring people together to raise awareness of issues affecting people with RMDs and is recognised every year on **12 October**
• For more information, please visit the website: [www.worldarthritisday.org](http://www.worldarthritisday.org)

---


\(^7\) Kirkham, B, de Vlam K et al., Early treatment of psoriatic arthritis is associated with improved patient-reported outcomes: findings from the etanercept PRESTA trial. (2015) 33(1): 11-9

4.0 Branding and artwork

An outline of the designed materials you can use or adapt to support the campaign

A campaign logo has been developed for use during the campaign, at events that you may wish to plan. The high resolution images and artwork files are available for you to adapt/translate.

Tip: the key messages are a great place to start when developing materials.

Campaign logo

![Campaign Logo](image-url)
5.0 RMDs wall chart

An educational wallchart has been developed for use during patient consultations.

Artwork files are available for translation and adaptation.

Feel free to print this out and attach it to a wall in your clinic to aid discussions with patients.
6.0 RMDs discussion guide

The discussion guide has been developed to support conversations with your patients.

Artwork files are available for translation and adaptation.
7.0 Event guidance

This section provides guidance on how to plan campaign events, including examples of the type of events that you may wish to host.

To support ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’, you may wish to plan or support an event to help spread the campaign message among the RMD community.

We strongly encourage you to collaborate with other local scientific and health professional communities and patient organisations when organising activities.

You can also contact your local PARE organisation to see if they are planning a public awareness event, and find out how you can support. You can find some guidance below on supporting or hosting an event in your country.

8.2 Supporting events hosted by your local PARE organisation

If your local PARE organisation is hosting a public awareness-raising event, there are several ways you can support from a scientific perspective:

1. Contact your local PARE organisation to find out if they have any plans
2. Attend kick-off meetings to discuss how you can collaborate on early diagnosis activities
3. Share relevant research data on early diagnosis which you have that may be useful for your local PARE organisations to know when developing event materials
4. Consider acting as a scientific spokesperson for events and media enquiries

8.3 Hosting your own event

You can find some guidance below on how to organise an event.

1. **Hold a kick-off meeting with other local health professional/physician networks**

This will help you brainstorm ideas and work collaboratively to organise your event.

2. **Decide what type of event you want to hold**

You may wish to hold an event to discuss early diagnosis and referral of RMDs in your country, such as a roundtable event with key figures from the RMD community in attendance:

- Hosting a conference or roundtable event is a great opportunity to engage key stakeholders, and to educate your peers and other health professionals on supporting early diagnosis
- This could include keynote speakers to cover topics such as the importance of early diagnosis and access to care, as well as an opportunity for the audience to ask questions
- You may wish to share recent research findings and relevant statistics on early diagnosis
- You may wish to focus events on a specific topic or condition, or more widely on the early diagnosis of all RMDs

Fighting rheumatic & musculoskeletal diseases together

#ConnectToday
• As part of your event, you may wish to host a workshop activity or breakout, during which attendees form smaller groups to participate in brainstorms or discussions
• You may wish to invite politicians, journalists, and health professionals to join the event
• See section 2.3 for an example of how this worked in Lisbon, Portugal

3. Decide when to hold your event

The global campaign launch will take place at the EULAR congress, and the Spanish launch will take place at the same time. We recommend hosting your local event to coincide with a milestone for greater impact, such as World Arthritis Day or a national awareness day.

The time of day that the event takes place is also important – for a roundtable event or a conference, you want to ensure your key guests and speakers can all attend.

4. Decide where to hold your event

If you are planning a roundtable event or conference, your event location should be:

• A meeting room, conference hall, or something similar
• In a place where there is space for speakers to stand and for an audience - consider whether your audience will be sitting round a conference table (roundtable event) or in an auditorium style
• Consider having a space for break-out sessions or workshop activities, with tables and chairs laid out so that attendees can regroup in smaller numbers

5. Invite people to take part in your event

Think about the key figures from the RMD community you would like to attend. Speakers will need to be approached in advanced, so think about who you would like to speak at your event, as well as how many speakers you would like to have.

You can invite people by email or letter. The invitation should be short, clear and concise and provide the following details:

• Location, date and time of the event
• An agenda for the meeting
• Details on the dress code (if required)
• Ask participants to RSVP with their contact details, so that you can send them reminders and updates about the event and campaign
• Your contact details for the day so that people can get in touch
8.0 World Arthritis Day

World Arthritis Day (WAD) is a global initiative bringing people together to raise awareness of issues affecting people with all forms of RMDs – from well-known conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis to less well-known RMDs such as fibromyalgia. WAD is recognised every year on 12 October. WAD forms part of the wider ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign.

The aims of WAD are:

- To raise awareness of RMDs amongst the medical community, people with RMDs and the general public
- To influence public policy by making decision-makers aware of the burden of RMDs and the steps which can be taken to ease them
- To ensure all people with RMDs and their caregivers are aware of the vast support network available to them

Central to World Arthritis Day efforts will be the development and sharing of our campaign video.

The video will encourage people to make earlier connections with their health professional and further highlight the importance of early diagnosis and the right treatment. This will launch on 12 October on the WAD website and social media channels and will be shared with you for use in local activities (under embargo until 12 October).

Consider hosting ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ events on or around World Arthritis Day, as this is a great platform to help generate awareness. Please do let us know of any campaign activity that you plan so that we can support it from the official WAD Facebook and Twitter channels, as well as the website.
9.0 Useful Contact Information

Below are a list of useful contacts. Please do reach out to us if you have any queries about the ‘Don’t Delay, Connect Today’ campaign or how you can support it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Tel</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria Batziou</td>
<td>EULAR Secretariat</td>
<td>+30 694 623 2776</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Maria.Batziou@eular.org">Maria.Batziou@eular.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birte Guesling</td>
<td>EULAR Secretariat</td>
<td>+49 228 962 12 83</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Birte.Guesling@eular.org">Birte.Guesling@eular.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia Tchambaz</td>
<td>EULAR Secretariat</td>
<td>+41 44 716 30 33</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Lydia.Tchambaz@eular.org">Lydia.Tchambaz@eular.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy Executive Director</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ursula Aring</td>
<td>EULAR Secretariat</td>
<td>+41 44 716 30 33</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ursula.Aring@eular.org">Ursula.Aring@eular.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communications Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for all your support!

We look forward to working with you throughout 2017 and beyond to help raise awareness of early diagnosis and improve the lives of those with RMDs.