

EULAR  
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Kilchberg,  
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## POINTS TO CONSIDER FOR STUDIES OF WORK PARTICIPATION IN PEOPLE WITH INFLAMMATORY ARTHRITIS

**A new publication from EULAR highlights the issues around designing, analysing, and reporting of studies using work participation as an outcome measurement.**

**Inflammatory arthritis is the name for a group of diseases that cause joint pain and swelling. This happens because the body's immune system attacks its own tissues and causes inflammation. Types of inflammatory arthritis include rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and axial spondyloarthritis. Inflammatory arthritis often affects people of working age, and can impact their employment. Work participation is often lower for people with inflammatory arthritis than the general population.**

Understanding work participation is important, but the way in which this is defined and measured in clinical trials is not always the same, which has made it hard to compare data. EULAR set up a taskforce to draft points to consider when designing studies that use work participation as a measure. The taskforce included doctors, experts and patients from 11 countries. They used the published evidence to draw up a set of points to consider.

Two overarching principles and nine points to consider were developed. The principles say that work participation is important for people with inflammatory arthritis, their families and society as a whole. They also point out that there are unique methodological aspects around designing, analysing and reporting studies with work participation as an outcome that require attention.

The points focus on identifying contextual factors upfront and account for them in analyses, as well as accounting for links between different work outcome domains and changes in work status over time. They also advise presenting results as means as well as proportions of patients reaching predefined meaningful categories. This helps people using the data to make comparisons between studies. Finally, they suggest that volume of productivity loss should be explicitly stated when costs are an outcome.

EULAR's current strategy states that 'by 2023, EULAR's activities and related advocacy will have increased participation in work by people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases. EULAR hope that using these points to consider when designing new studies will improve the quality of data available about work in people with inflammatory arthritis, enabling comparisons across studies and the production of good-quality meta-analyses that can inform clinical practice and management for people with these diseases.

### Source

[Boonen A, Putrik P, Marques ML, et al. EULAR Points to Consider \(PtC\) for designing, analysing and reporting of studies with work participation as an outcome domain in patients with inflammatory arthritis. \*Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases\* Published Online First: 08 April 2021. doi: 10.1136/annrheumdis-2020-219523](#)

### About EULAR

EULAR is the European umbrella organisation representing scientific societies, health professional associations and organisations for people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs). EULAR aims to reduce the burden of RMDs on individuals and society and to improve the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of RMDs. To this end, EULAR fosters

excellence in education and research in the field of rheumatology. It promotes the translation of research advances into daily care and fights for the recognition of the needs of people with RMDs by the EU institutions through advocacy action.

### **About the EULAR European Congress of Rheumatology**

Since its introduction in 2000, the annual EULAR European Congress of Rheumatology has become the primary platform for exchange of scientific and clinical information in Europe. It is also a renowned forum for interaction between medical doctors, scientists, people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry worldwide. The EULAR congress is usually held in June in one of the major cities in Europe ([see previous congresses](#)).

The [scientific programme](#) at the congress covers a wide range of topics on clinical innovations, clinical, translational and basic science. Meetings set up by associations of people with arthritis/rheumatism, health professionals and the health care industry complement the programme. The poster sessions, offering lively interaction between presenters and participants, are regarded by many as the heart of the congress.

Over the years, the EULAR Congress has gained a reputation of being a most innovative platform for the practicing physician particularly with respect to the acquisition of information on novel clinical research. The congress attracts more than 18,000 delegates from more than 130 countries.

The aim of the EULAR European Congress of Rheumatology is to provide a forum of the highest standard for scientific, both clinical and basic, educational, and social exchange between professionals involved in rheumatology, liaising with patient organisations, in order to achieve progress in the clinical care of people with rheumatic diseases.

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