



Standards of Care for People with Rheumatoid Arthritis

eumusc.net standards of care aim to ensure that health care professionals know what should be done for people with rheumatoid arthritis, and so that people with the condition know what standards of care they should receive. There are also checklists for people with rheumatoid arthritis to use to ensure they are receiving the most appropriate care.

These recommendations are based on existing Clinical Practice Guidelines and expert consensus. The standards focus on prevention, access to care, early treatment and management of established disease.

What this means for you and your rheumatoid arthritis...

1. Was my RA diagnosed by a specialised health professional within 6 weeks of onset of symptoms?
2. Do I understand my disease, my role in its management and the role of health professionals?
Have I been given information in different formats and/ or education about my disease?
Have I been given information and / or education about treatments, their benefits and risks?
Have I been given information and education relevant to my needs i.e. pain/flare management, drug reactions?
Have I been given information about, and given contact details of, relevant patient charities and organisations which are considered to be trusted sources of evidence based information?
3. Have I received a treatment plan which includes explanation of my management, expected goals and outcomes and important contact details?
4. Was I informed about expected benefits and potential risks of treatment?
Was I assessed for clinical status and safety before the treatment was started?
Was I informed about vaccination?
5. Have I received a schedule of regular assessments of my disease – The symptoms, disease activity and of what I can do?

6. Have I been informed when, how, and who I can contact in case my disease is worsening?
7. Am I receiving a disease modifying anti-rheumatic drug, and if not, do I understand why not?
8. If my target of low disease activity or remission is not achieved, is my treatment reappraised at least every 3 months?
9. Do I know how to control pain associated with my RA?
10. Have I been informed about the options of surgery and have the benefits and risks been explained?
11. Do I have access to pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments according to my clinical need?
12. Do I have the opportunity to receive support if needed from health professionals such as rheumatologist, dietician, general practitioner, nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist and social worker?
Have I been offered information about how, why and when to contact different members of the multi-disciplinary team as soon as possible after my diagnosis was made?
13. Have I been informed about physical activity and exercises specific for me?
14. Have I received information and if necessary advice and training on aids, devices and ergonomic principles to enhance function in daily life and participation in social roles?
15. Have I been informed about a healthy lifestyle?

Have I been informed about alternative therapies and the limited evidence available?

eumusc.net is an information and surveillance network promoting a comprehensive European strategy to optimise musculoskeletal health. It addresses the prevention and management of MSC's which is neither equitable nor a priority within most EU member states. It is focused on raising the awareness of musculoskeletal health and harmonising the care of rheumatic and musculoskeletal conditions.

It is a 3 year project that began in February 2010. It is supported by the European Community (EC Community Action in the Field of Health 2008-2013), the project is a network of institutions, researchers and individuals in 22 organisations across 17 countries, working with and through EULAR.

eumusc.net: creating a web-based information resource to drive musculoskeletal health in Europe
www.eumusc.net