EXPLORING THE RELATION BETWEEN IMPAIRMENT RATINGS BY DAS28 AND BODY FUNCTION, ACTIVITY- PARTICIPATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS BASED ON ICF IN THE PATIENT WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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Background: Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is the cause of functional loss and disability of individuals. It also results in negative effects on the emotional components as well as physical components related to health. If specific domains of medical condition criteria are systemically linked with relevant parts of ICF, we will have a common conceptual understanding of ICF and patient-oriented health criteria. It may also make it easier for the patient to support groups, better education by health professionals, and public awareness of SLE would help them cope with the disease.

Conclusions: Indigent South African women with SLE in SA have complex, chronic and challenging life experiences. A poor understanding and acceptance of SLE by patients themselves, compounded by a sense of poverty and a perception of being misunderstood by family members, health professionals and the community at large had negative impact on the multiple dimensions of patient’s lives.

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REFERENCE:

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AB1444-HPR UNDERSTANDING FATIGUE BURDEN AND COPING STRATEGIES IN RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS USING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

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Background: Fatigue is a major symptom of RA but is under-represented when considering an appropriate treatment and in the measurement of disease activity. At the same time, patients’ perspectives on fatigue in the overall context of their RA and life have not been studied in detail before. To understand that perspective, we aimed to explore patients’ lived experience with RA-related fatigue.

Objectives: We explored the narratives of patients with RA and their discourse on RA-related fatigue to assess the burden of disease and coping strategies.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with adult patients with RA living in two geographical regions in the United States. Interviewees were asked to discuss their experiences with diagnosis, symptoms, physical and social limitations, coping with challenges, treatment and healthcare providers. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. An interview codebook was developed for themes related to the burden of RA-related fatigue and coping strategies.

Results: Eighteen patients were interviewed, with ages ranging from 27 to 80 years and RA duration ranging from 4 to 40 years. Four themes emerged around the impact of RA-related fatigue, fatigue in context of RA symptoms, coping strategies and coping success (table 1).

Abstract AB1444-HPR – Table 1. Burden of RA-Related Fatigue and Coping Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue limits RA patients’ ability to live their lives</td>
<td>– Patients with RA have limited energy reserves to perform common activities of daily living - Fatigue creates ‘brain fog’ that reduces RA patients’ ability to focus and diminishes academic and job performance - Patients with RA adjust their future career choices based on these limitations</td>
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<td>Fatigue and pain are intertwined</td>
<td>– Fatigue is strongly connected with pain and is difficult for patients with RA to separate the two symptoms. Pain and active RA symptoms increase fatigue. Fatigue also amplifies pain - Patients can be a bigger concern than pain. Patients with RA find it harder to manage fatigue compared with pain</td>
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<td>Coping with fatigue is an internal struggle</td>
<td>– Patients with RA are faced with the tough choice of giving in to the fatigue or pushing through and risk exceeding energy reserves - Patients with RA who have difficulty coping with fatigue feel frustrated, embarrassed and inadequate</td>
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<td>Acceptance of limitations leads to more effective coping strategies</td>
<td>– Patients with RA use a variety of coping strategies, often in combination - Coping strategies include pushing through the fatigue, using distractions, pacing oneself, sleeping, drinking coffee and using medication - Patients with RA who accept their limitations are more likely to pace themselves, as opposed to pushing through their limits, and have fewer negative emotions when they give up</td>
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Conclusions: Fatigue is a major concern for patients with RA and can be more debilitating than pain. A patient’s constant battle with fatigue can have physical, mental and emotional consequences.