



Work-related discussions between French rheumatologists and their rheumatoid arthritis patients

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Résumé en anglais	<p>BACKGROUND: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) causes significant impairment of physical function, and thus adversely affects patients' ability to work.</p> <p>AIMS: To document how often work limitations are discussed by rheumatologists and RA patients during consultations.</p> <p>METHODS: We conducted an observational study in a sample of French rheumatologists and in a parallel sample of patients recruited by pharmacists. We asked all rheumatologists in France practising in private practice or mixed practice (private practice and hospital) to participate in a telephone survey about their most recent consultation with an RA patient. Randomly selected pharmacists recruited RA patients to complete a questionnaire about their most recent consultation with their rheumatologist. We included patients aged 20-59, with a paid job or unemployed. We calculated the proportion of consultations including work-related discussions in both samples.</p> <p>RESULTS: Of the 1737 rheumatologists contacted, 153 (9%) described consultations with eligible patients. Of the 1200 pharmacists contacted, 39 (3%) recruited 81 RA patients. The proportion of consultations including work-related discussions was 50% [95% confidence interval (CI) 42-58%] in the rheumatologist sample and 52% (95% CI 41-63%) in the patient sample. The most frequent subject of discussion (88%) was physical problems related to work in both samples.</p> <p>CONCLUSIONS: This is the first study to document the proportion of consultations where rheumatologists and their RA patients discuss work. Both specialists and patients reported that work was discussed in one in every two consultations.</p>

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