

Research to Help Underserved Populations

Innovative Adaptation and Dissemination of AHRQ Comparative Effectiveness Research Products

Medication Summary Guides for Vulnerable Populations with Rheumatoid Arthritis

Description

Outcomes for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) have improved as a result of earlier use of, and a wider array of, disease-modifying anti-rheumatoid medications (DMARDs). However, some vulnerable populations--defined by race/ethnicity, language, literacy, and socioeconomic status--have lagged in the use of DMARDs and in improvement of outcomes.

This project developed a printed medication guide for patients and a decision aid for health care providers (to help patients and their physicians talk about medications) for vulnerable populations with RA. Both resources were based on information in AHRQ's consumer medication summary on RA.

Project Aims

The project aims were to:

- 1) Assess current knowledge of therapeutic options in RA.
- 2) Assess the acceptability and utility of summary guides; physician and interpreter awareness of summary guides and viewpoints on how to improve them; and patients' preferences for roles in decision-making and for various modes of presenting information.
- 3) Develop an innovative medication guide and decision aid to help patients and physicians talk about medications.
- 4) Conduct a pilot trial varying communication between patients and physicians. The trial had three arms: a) original AHRQ consumer medication summary pre/post visit, b) the new medication guide pre/post visit, and c) the new medication guide plus decision aid during the physician visit.

Findings

The researchers found increased knowledge of RA and decreased decisional conflict about the use of RA medications in the group that used the new guide and decision aid compared with the control group, which had access only to AHRQ's consumer RA summary.

Study Populations African American
Asian Hispanic/Latino

Health Condition Addressed
Rheumatoid Arthritis

Dissemination Tool and/or Method
Decision Aid for health care providers
(available in English, Spanish and Chinese)

Medication Guide for patients (available in English, Spanish and Chinese)

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