

00378 Exploring Healthcare Related Perspectives Among People With Rheumatoid Arthritis Associated Interstitial Lung Disease

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Aims: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is the most prevalent connective tissue disease (CTD) affecting 0.24 percent worldwide. Frequently used drugs for the treatment of RA and other CTD have been associated with interstitial lung disease (ILD), with 10-20% of people with RA affected by ILD. This study was aimed at exploring healthcare related perspectives among people with rheumatoid arthritis associated interstitial lung disease (RA-ILD).

Methodology: This was a qualitative exploratory research using six semi-structured one-to-one in-depth interviews. Inclusion criteria included adult patients diagnosed with CTD associated ILD, continuing specialists follow up within St George's Hospital, and the ability to express thoughts distinctly in English. Those with severe musculoskeletal, cardiovascular and neurological complications, or unable to communicate in English and/or provide informed consent were excluded. Data analysis was performed by thematic analysis. Codes and themes were sorted out on Microsoft Word.

Result: Responses obtained were from three males and three females aged between 58 and 82. It was found that there was a general lack of understanding of their medical condition. This could be attributed to coping through denial and the lack of clear explanation from healthcare providers. Some had resorted to obtaining information from unreliable sources such as the internet and their social network, which could have caused distress and anxiety. However, despite having to accept their medical condition and associated symptoms, these people appear to remain positive and engage in their usual daily activities.

Conclusion: Healthcare providers can play a pivotal role in educating patients. This can facilitate self- management and optimise quality of life among patients. Understanding the needs of patients and communicating clearly the information they want might also enable better collaborative care decisions and compliance to treatment in people with RA-ILD.