HIGH DEMAND OF RA-INSTRUCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM OF HEALTHCARE STAFF

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My abstract has been or will be presented at a scientific meeting during a 12 months period prior to EULAR 2014: No

Is the first author applying for a travel bursary?: No

Background: In 1988 the University of Texas, Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW) started "Arthritis Educator Program". The purpose was to improve rheumatology training of future physicians using patients with rheumatoid arthritis. However the program struck so well that it soon came to be directed at general practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others. When it was introduced in Sweden we called it RA-Instruktörer - RA-Instructor training program. An RA-Instructor is a person with rheumatoid arthritis who is trained to teach health-care staff how to conduct a joint investigation provides information on typical RA symptoms and share their patient experience. Since the Swedish Rheumatism Association in 2012 handed over the business to its training company Reuma Development limited company (RD) we have experienced at an increased demand of RA-Instructor training program.

Objectives: Our main objective of RA-Instructor training program is to improve rheumatology training of physicians, general practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists using patients with rheumatoid arthritis.

Methods: We have signed contracts with medical education providers, physical therapist education, primary health care centers etc. At the same time we organize schedules, fee reports, evaluation reports and procedures etc with our RA-Instructors. We inform about the program through our website www.reumautveckling.org with the title "Knowledge which makes difference". We have updated and printed a new edition of our educational material “Manual in hand and wrist examination in RA” with the latest scientific knowledge about RA.

Results: During 2013 we completed over 100 training sessions for medical students, physical therapist education, occupational training, foot care education and primary health care etc. We reached over 1000 students and receive a very high score in their evaluation.

Conclusions: The primary conclusion is that we want to continue with the RA-Instructors training program. In 2014 we are organizing competence development for our group leaders, skills development of those RA-Instructors we have, and we will also recruit and train 10-20 new RA-Instructors. The website www.reumautveckling.org will be updated including with short videos introducing and presenting RA-Instructors in action. We also need to keep up the same high score in the evaluation from students and customers. On a long term basis we want to double the customer list, complete over 250-350 training sessions per year and simplify and reduce administrative costs.

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