

## EFFECTIVENESS OF NURSE-LED CARE AS ALTERNATIVE TO RHEUMATOLOGIST FOLLOW-UP IN RA PATIENTS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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**Introduction:** Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune joint disease with an increased risk of joint damage and disability if disease control isn't achieved and optimized from early on. Traditionally RA patients are managed by planned medical consultations every 3–12 months; however several recent studies have been demonstrated that this work can be effectively performed by trained nurses. **Objectives:** To determine the effectiveness of nurse led consultations in disease activity, fatigue, pain, quality of life, self-efficacy, treatment adherence in patients with RA when compared to rheumatologists. **Methods:** A systematic review following the principles proposed by the Cochrane Handbook was performed by a systematic search in PubMed, Embase and EBSCO from 2005 to 30 December 2015 (with monthly updates). Two reviewers independently selected articles, collected data from studies and carried out a manual search of the references of the included studies. For the critical appraisal of the studies we used the scale from Centre for Evidence Based Medicine of Faculty of Medicine Lisbon, and the primary outcome were disease activity, fatigue, pain, quality of life, self-efficacy, and treatment adherence. We excluded studies where the patients didn't have RA in low disease activity. **Results:** 126 studies were identified and after duplicates removal, we proceeded with 100 studies. The selection by title and abstract selection leaves us with 11 studies for full reading. Our final selection included 13 (2 gathered by manual search). Preliminary results show that nursing consultations are a good alternative to rheumatologist consultations without deterioration of disease control. **Conclusions:** Nursing consultation can enhance patient's self-efficacy, treatment adherence and pain control. **Keywords:** Rheumatoid arthritis; Nurse's role; Education