

## Background

❖Chronic arthritis including Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) and Osteoarthritis (OA) affects people in many ways such as pain, fatigue, work loss and poor function.

❖Multi-disciplinary care and self-management programs are important in chronic musculoskeletal diseases as adjunctive treatment, and result in more favourable outcomes.

❖Patients often have excuses as to why they don't attend such programs.

❖Attendance at a one day multi-disciplinary program is the main way of having patients commit to a more intensive evidence based two-week self management program at St. Joseph's Hospital, London, ON.

## Objectives

❖To determine if an intervention of televised testimonials from rheumatologists and allied health professionals increases attendance at a multi-disciplinary education day for rheumatologist patients seen in a large university hospital clinic

## Methods

❖Randomized controlled trial

❖The one-day education day was videotaped, with testimonials from a rheumatologist or clinic staff inserted into the footage every few minutes, discussing the benefits of attending the education day

❖Program had sessions on coping, education of diseases and treatment including talks from an OT, PT, pharmacist, psychologist, rheumatologist, nurse, and patient

❖All patients were tracked to determine if they attended a subsequent education day over the next 10 months

❖The intervention was done with random allocation of two monthly blocks (one was intervention of televised testimonials in the waiting room and the other was no intervention) over six months (3 blocks) and determining attendance at an Education Day over a total of 10 months (6 months of the study and 4 months thereafter) to determine if the intervention was effective by comparing the attendance of patients who received and did not receive the intervention

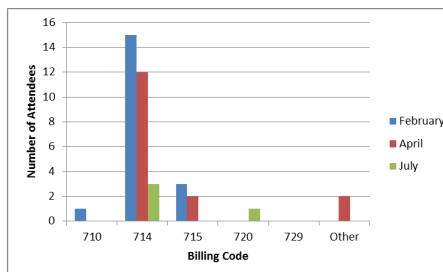
❖Attendees of the education day were given a questionnaire that asked them what influenced their attendance and allowed them to provide feedback on the program

## Results

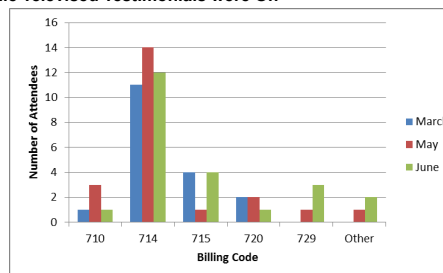
**Table 1. Number of patients who attended the Arthritis Day Program (testimonials either on or off) in relation to total number of patients visiting the clinics**

Month	February	March	April	May	June	July	Off					
Dr. J Pope	175	3	276	3	243	8	278	7	295	10	210	0
Dr. N LeBlonde	83	1	120	1	83	0	164	1	159	4	93	0
Dr. S Rehekar	179	4	189	2	145	3	248	7	228	3	187	0
Dr. A Thompson	113	4	190	6	186	1	167	1	215	3	178	2
Dr. G Rehekar	94	7	112	3	89	4	169	6	98	2	110	2
Sum	644	19	887	15	746	16	1026	22	995	22	778	4

**Figure 1. Number of Attendees to Education Day Program while Televised Testimonials were Off**

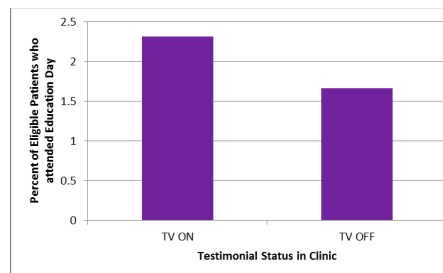


**Figure 2. Number of Attendees to Education Day Program while Televised Testimonials were On**



Billing Codes:  
710: SLE (Lupus), Connective Tissue Disease. Scleroderma, Dermatomyositis, Polymyocitis  
714 Rheumatoid Arthritis  
715: Osteoarthritis  
720: Ankylosing Spondylitis, Arthritis of Crohn's Disease, Spondyl-Arthritis  
729: Fibromyalgia

**Figure 3. Percentage of patients attending Education Day relative to number of eligible patients seen in clinic.**



## Results

There was an increase in attendees at the multi-disciplinary education days for patients who saw the televised testimonials.

64 patients who viewed the testimonials (2.2% of 2896) attended the education day compared to 39 who didn't receive the intervention (1.8% of 2164); p=0.3.

The numbers of attendees increased but the rates of attendance were still very low in both groups.

## Conclusion

❖Attendance of eligible patients increased during televised testimonials, but this increase was not significant

❖Many eligible patients did not attend the program

❖Other interventions are necessary to encourage attendance as the one day program is the main way of having patients commit to a more intensive evidence based two-week self management program

## Limitations

❖Only first clinic visit in the six-month time period was recorded for each patient, so patients with multiple clinic visits within this time frame may have seen the testimonials at later visit dates.

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