

# Clinical Research Applied to Daily Clinical Practice; Learn From Your Colleagues How to Get Answers to Questions you Always Wanted to Ask

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CANADIAN INITIATIVE FOR OUTCOMES IN RHEUMATOLOGY CARE

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Disclosures - none

# Learning Objectives:

1. To facilitate networking ideas to establish a multi-disciplinary team; making connections
2. To identify strategies for getting “buy-in” for conducting your research in a primary care setting and implementing results
3. To establish understanding of the needs of the practice and practitioner and target them accordingly; learn what works and what doesn't

# Background: Motivation for the GALs study

- Musculoskeletal (MSK) complaints are common in primary care - account for 15-30% of patient visits<sup>(1-4)</sup>
- Identification of MSK conditions in primary care is a challenge, specifically signs /symptoms related to RA<sup>(4-7)</sup>
- MSK exam is often omitted from routine physical examination<sup>(5, 6)</sup>

# Background Motivation (cont'd)

- Reported reasons for discomfort managing MSK conditions<sup>(5, 8-12)</sup>:
  - lack of interest and/or perceived importance
  - time constraints
  - lack of confidence, deficiencies in exam skills and knowledge about MSK diseases <sup>(2, 3, 5, 6)</sup>
- Undergraduate MSK clinical skills teaching in UK, US and Canada is inadequate<sup>(1, 4, 7)</sup>; 2.25% of Canadian med school curriculum devoted to MSK <sup>(1, 4)</sup>
- Time spent in MSK education is disproportionate to the proportion of primary care visits related to MSK complaints

# Background Motivation (cont'd)

- 2005, Summit on Standards for Arthritis Prevention and Care established standards:
- 5) All relevant health professionals must be able to perform a valid, standardized, age-appropriate musculoskeletal screening assessment.
- 6) Inflammatory arthritis must be identified and treated appropriately within four weeks of seeing a health care professional.

# Background Motivation (cont'd)

- 2005, Summit on Standards for Arthritis Prevention and Care research questions:
  - What is the reliability and validity of commonly-used arthritis screening assessment tools, including GALS, for the detection of synovitis (joint inflammation)? Joint derangement? In children and adults?
  - Will training of primary care/community care practitioners in the performance of reliable and valid screening tools for arthritis in children, adolescents and adults increase the number of arthritis evaluations performed? Reduce time to diagnosis, institution of effective treatments?

# The GALS Study Was Born!

- Teach healthcare professionals how to perform the GALS exam
- “Test” their ability to detect inflammatory / rheumatoid arthritis in a primary care setting
- Determine the level of agreement between healthcare professionals and rheumatologists in identifying other MSK abnormalities



# 1. Networking ideas to establish a multi-disciplinary team; making connections

- Write down research questions you would like to answer – be specific, start small

Can the GALS MSK screening exam be effectively used by FPs, PTs and NPs to screen for signs and symptoms of RA?

- List “types” of people you need on your team

Rheumatologists  
Family Doctors  
Physiotherapists  
Nurse Practitioners

Biostatistician  
Methodologist  
Research Co-ordinator  
Students?

# 1. Networking ideas; making connections

## Rheumatologists

- conferences & workshops, academic departments, publications, professional organizations (CAN, CRA, ACR), word of mouth

Family Doctors  
Physiotherapists  
Nurse Practitioners

Other ideas?

- rheumatologists' connections, primary care centre or clinic, academic departments, professional organizations, word of mouth

# 1. Networking ideas; making connections

Biostatistician  
Methodologist  
Research Co-ordinator  
Students?

Other ideas?

- academic departments (e.g. health research methodology, biostatistics & epidemiology), students
- graduates of certified clinical research associate programs, word of mouth
- online posting, academic departments, co-op job placements

# 1. Networking ideas to establish a multi-disciplinary team; making connections

## TIPS (from experience)

- ✓ Find 1 “lead” person from each group – don’t try to find individuals yourself
- ✓ Listen to recommendations – positive and negative!
- ✓ Be patient and don’t give up – be persistent
- ✓ Be honest about expectations up front

## 2. Strategies for getting “buy-in” for your research and implementing results

➤ Write down what you want your colleagues to do, brainstorm what they will get out of it!

- GALS – spend time in training, learn about arthritides, assess study participants
- Learn about a tool to make MSK assessments easier and more efficient

➤ Find the best way to get “buy in” for research

Improved clinical skills  
Improvement of patient care  
Money (honorarium)  
Publications

You need to ASK them what they want and what you can do!

## 2. Strategies for getting “buy-in” for your research and implementing results

### TIPS (from experience)

- ✓ Make sure you can convey the benefits of your research and outcomes to your colleagues, participants, etc.
- ✓ Look at your study from your colleagues or participants' point of view
- ✓ Don't assume you know what these benefits are!
- ✓ Good, honest communication is key

### 3. Understand the clinical needs of the practice & practitioner; target them accordingly

- Meet with those who will benefit from your research – get input regarding clinical use of study
- Consider the barriers to your project and try to address each and every one (be objective)
- Design your project to answer your question AND yield results that are clinically applicable
- For GALS -

Ensure healthcare professionals can integrate GALS into routine physical examination

### 3. Understand the clinical needs of the practice & practitioner; target them accordingly

#### TIPS (from experience)

- ✓ Conduct a “needs assessment” before designing the study
- ✓ Consider the limitations of the study – weigh them each
- ✓ Ultimately, you want your results to be **APPLIED** to clinical practice – follow-up after the study is complete for future directions



# Thank-you

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  - ✓ **HCP from Stonechurch and McMaster Family Practice clinics**
  - ✓ **Dr. George Ioannidis, Dr. Paul Stratford**
  - ✓ **Students**
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- **Questions?**

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