
## **RHEUMAPS**

## (**RHEU**matic and musculoskeletal conditions: geographical **MA**pping of **P**revalence and outcome**S**): Understanding the experiences and priorities for care for people with RMDs living in rural areas.

Dear Colleague,

In collaboration with local clinicians, the Aberdeen Centre for Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Health would be very grateful if your practice would please consider allowing data to be withdrawn to help us determine the burden of rheumatic and musculoskeletal disease (RMD), health care outcomes and patterns of healthcare use across rural and urban areas in the North of Scotland. This will happen via Albasoft (a Trusted Third Party (TTP) provider) using software already installed on your IT system.

Along with patient survey and interview data, this will be used to support vital local service planning, resource allocation and inform decision-making in both community and secondary care to best meet immediate and ongoing future health and care demands for people with RMDs.

Overleaf is a fuller description of the study and what it means for your practice, along with information on data protection and information on a payment for agreeing to participate.

Please email rachel.kerr@albasoft.scot to register your interest

For further information on the study please click on the link below:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/iahs/research/epidemiology/mapping-rmd-study-1688.php>

Many thanks in anticipation.

Yours sincerely



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Rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) represent a significant proportion of primary care consultations. Many people are managed exclusively in primary care, whilst others also receive care in specialist services. Delays in diagnosis and treatment are associated with poorer clinical and work outcomes, and many people with RMDs are older and have other complex health care needs. Furthermore, up to one third of the UK population live in rural areas which presents additional challenges to the delivery of timely and equitable healthcare services. However, local resource allocation is largely informed by judgement rather than evidence.

This study aims to determine the prevalence of RMDs across rural and urban areas in Scotland, their health outcomes and patterns of healthcare use. Our findings will be critical to support vital healthcare service planning and decision-making for those with RMDs to meet immediate and future health and care needs.

Using a combination of diagnostic, symptom and monitoring READ codes, we will identify patients with selected RMD conditions from primary care. We will also collect their socio-demographic, primary care healthcare use, lifestyle (smoking, alcohol) and relevant co-morbidity data. Albasoft (a Trusted Third Party (TTP) provider) will identify eligible patients and extract primary care data required and transfer the data securely to the National Safe Haven. The cohort will then be linked to NHS databases within the National Safe Haven (eDRIS) (outpatient attendances, hospital and out of hours care and community prescribing). We are gathering similar data in Wales in collaboration with the University of Swansea.

This study has been approved by the Public and Privacy Panel for Health and Social Care in Scotland (REF 1819-0286). You do not have to notify individual patients. This is because technical and organisational measures that respect the principle of data minimisation are in place. All data will de-identified and researchers will only be able to access this data in the National Data Safe Haven.

Albasoft Ltd will be acting as a TTP and data processor on your behalf as data controller to ensure that all data is safely and securely extracted using your existing Escro software.

**No administration time** will be required from the practice for this study and an ex-gratia payment of £100 will be paid by the University to the practice in in appreciation of you completing the study agreement.

**Would your practice like to participate?**

If so, please reply to rachel.kerr@albasoft.scot expressing your interest and you will be forwarded a link to an online study agreement form which will only take a few minutes to complete.

**GDPR Compliance Statement**

The lawful basis for processing data is Article 6, 1(e) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): the processing is necessary for a task in the public interest or for official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law. Conduct of research is one of the statutory functions of the University, and the conduct of research to improve the delivery of health care is a task carried out in the public interest. The lawful basis for the processing of special category personal data is Article 9, 2(j):

Processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes in accordance with Article 89(1) based on Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject. The processing for research purposes meets the safeguards required by the GDPR Article 89 and in the Data Protection Act 2018, section 19.